

BIBLE-TALKS THAT MAKE THE BIBLE TALK  
"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORD GIVETH LIGHT"

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# THE IMMORTALS

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## WHO THEY ARE

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THE BEATITUDES IN DAYLIGHT

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BY

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Christ, the wisdom of God, is made unto us  
wisdom. —*1 Cor. 1:24,30.*

I have given them the words thou gavest me  
(not my theories, ideals, fancies, sentiments).  
Thy word is the truth. —*John 17:8,17.*

But one thing is needful. Mary has chosen  
that good part which will not be taken away  
from her. —*Luke 10:42.*

We are all here present before God to hear  
all things that are commanded thee of God.  
—*Acts 10:33.*

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## FOREWORD

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AMONG the great questions, the supreme questions, one of the most interesting, important and significant is What art thou? Whence camest thou? is interesting. Whither goest thou? is of importance. What art thou? is practical and determinative. The name "I AM" is most highly significant. What God is within himself, eternally, so unchangeable in complete integrity, is the supreme consideration. All else but expresses this. It is the pervading and prevailing thought in all the Scriptures of truth. To bring man into participation in the character of God is the objective of all the processes of salvation—a restoration and an exaltation.

The Sermon-on-the-Mount is a statement of the principles of divine life applied to human conditions. The Kingdom of Heaven is the realm of Divine Reality. Its primary principles are stated in the Beatitudes recorded in Matt. 5:3-12. For more than half a century I held the conventional regard for the Sermon-on-the-Mount and recognized the Beatitudes as very special divine testimony. Recently, in preparing some Bible Talks on the Beatitudes, I consulted the Greek Testament (as every teacher should do before he opens his mouth or dips his pen in ink or hits a typewriter key) where I found some surprises, giving a new and fuller appreciation of the wonderful meaning of the very fundamental principles of the Kingdom of Heaven. The divine wisdom shined forth with a radiance as of a new revelation exalting the Immortal Personality, the God-Character,

until a new thrill of love for the beautiful, the good and the true One incited a new hunger and thirst to fully know Him whom to know is life eternal. "Seek, and you shall find". There is so much failure just from lack of study of the word that reveals the Father.

Clearer understanding of the Beatitudes makes the Kingdom of Heaven more real and more glorious in our consciousness. We recognize as never before the present indwelling of that reign of all good in the believing heart, with a sense and appreciation of not only fellowship with God but sonship—partaking of his nature so that he lives in us.

This book is offered with and from a wish to help others to a fuller and richer experience of the kingdom within, and to a better realization of the immortality that already glorifies real faith in Jesus Christ. A truly happy surprise awaits all who will simply and sincerely study to know the mind of the Lord in the very first words of his description of the Kingdom of Heaven as it came to dwell on earth, within men—the Beatitudes. No magic, no "Presto", brings the reign of truth. Neglect of simple investigation leaves us in darkness. The door is opened only to those who are interested enough to knock, to persist in inquiry. Some benefit comes to those who only ask; more to those who seek; fullness of fellowship in the truth only to those who persist, the knockers at the door. The sorrowful regret, remonstrance and reproof "You are not willing to come to me that you may have life" suggests something of the importance of Christ's teaching and man's responsibility for heeding. Sheer perversity spurns Christ's help.

We are to look at the Beatitudes in sincerity, so all will be "plain as daylight". No apology is proper when the light shows up the unpleasant things of the carnal mind, the practices of the world, or the delusions from



deceiving spirits, all of which are contrary to the very nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. As God never uses camouflage, so will we use plain language. Only those who are honest with God and themselves will care for this book. It is intended for such, and will help such. God lives in light and is light. He is not a vague and theoretical ideal, but is the eternal truth. We are not to speculate about uncertainties, but to inquire and accept just what we find. All who are of light come to light. Any who refuse light prove themselves to be darkness without hurting the light. This book is for thinkers who want truth, not fiction or drama.

Some topics are dwelt upon more than others because of what is involved and to emphasize the contrast between God's righteousness and man's waywardness. It is necessary to repeat references to some matters that have bearings or relations with different Beatitudes, but those items are important enough to hold full interest through the brief repetitions.

"Blessed" is the word of emphasis throughout. All who read appreciatively will be lifted into happy fellowship with Him who delights to give his immortality to those who care for it enough to become faithful followers of his incarnate Son, Jesus Christ.

M. E. S.

SAINT PAUL, *July*, 1932.

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## THE BEATITUDES

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Blessed are the poor in spirit;  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn;  
for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek;  
for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst  
after righteousness;  
for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful;  
for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart;  
for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers;  
for they shall be called the sons of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted  
for righteousness' sake;  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and  
persecute you, and shall say all manner  
of evil against you falsely for my sake.  
Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is  
your reward in heaven; for so persecuted  
they the prophets which were before you.

# THE IMMORTALS

WHO THEY ARE

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## THE GREAT SURPRISE

"BLESSED ARE" introduced into the world very striking changes in the prevailing conceptions of life in its essential nature, value, unfoldment and destiny. Those simple sentences so introduced revealed undreamed-of things to that little band of disciples on the low mountain by the lakeside in Galilee and to the wondering crowd that gathered close by. Listeners were thrilled into astonishment at words spoken with the evident authority of direct understanding and the positiveness of wisdom. First-hand truths impress with living force where halting quotations satiate unto indifference and weariness. The old, stiff, merciless formularies of Judaic piety wrought only misery and failure in the most devoted, where bondage to legal exactions was a galling yoke, a wearing burden. The explanations of blessedness as the primary distinction of the Kingdom of Heaven were a surprise, if not a sensation. With the word of his mouth Jesus cast a bomb into the camp of Jewish Rabbinism. And, in their proper interpretation and application, the Beatitudes are even now startling to the strangely darkened Christian consciousness.

The original situation was such that the higher truth could not be introduced even among the chosen people until they should change their minds—their attitude and will—towards all life. "Repent; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" was an absolutely necessary



preliminary to the announcement and reception of the divine message of Messiah. Familiar as the people were with the expectation of Messiah's coming, they had no proper conception of its real meaning nor of the nature of his reign. Even the casual reader of history and of the Old Testament Scriptures knows how unspiritual were Jewish conceptions even in sacred things. Details of the situation make tedious reading, and it is sufficient here to merely glance at some items to give us keener appreciation of the startling novelty of the Beatitudes as the announcement of the basic principles of the Messianic Kingdom—the Kingdom of Heaven which the Messiah came to establish on earth.

The importance of a clear understanding of the wide difference between the old order and the new—between Judaism and the Kingdom of Heaven—justifies a little repetition in varied language to strengthen the needed emphasis. The common notion is that the new order, Christianity, is a development or unfolding of the old Judaism. This persistent Ebionism has been, and now is, the worst enemy of Christ and the greatest hindrance to the Gospel. The New Testament does not at all teach the derivation doctrine but a new creation—a revolution in both thought and practice. The new covenant is not built upon the old, but is a substitution for it. Jesus is surety and mediator of a better covenant established on better promises (Heb. 7:22; 8:6). The old order was abolished never to be restored—not modified or added to, as many falsely teach. The greatest weakness now in religion is in the misguided attempt to hold to both the old and new covenants, or dispensations. But, as it is impossible to serve two masters at the same time, or to worship two Gods, so is it impossible to be both a legalist and a Christian. Christendom falls from grace when it reverts to the Mosaic institution. It thereby



repudiates Christ and all his work. Judaic Christianity is the worst infidelity. So emphasizes the apostle Paul. The very suggestion of a needed repentance (change of mind or attitude) on the part of Jews is *prima facie* indication that the new teaching was to be different from the old in important respects. That difference is clearly and completely explained in Paul's epistles, yet few in Christendom heed it today.

#### ESSENTIAL CONTRASTS

The Jews had an enthusiastic patriotism strengthened by their peculiar religious separation. Race pride was marked among them. The "holier-than-thou" attitude prevailed to the point of hypocrisy. National honor was gloried in even when personal morality was neglected. For this lapse in true honor (accompanied by idolatrous apostasy) Israel suffered from heathen nations, even to the point of captivity.

When the time was ripe for it, God sent his Son, the expected Messiah of Jewish prophecy and eager longing, to establish a new and better regime, or dispensation. The more devout and earnestly disposed held a hope for the "Consolation of Israel," yet, when Messiah did come, he was not recognized or received by his own. They were prejudiced by human traditions until unable to appreciate his fulfillment of prophetic descriptions which they ignored. With all his earnestness and diligence, John Baptist was unable to complete the work of preparation. Christ came at the peak of a crisis and had to continue for a time the call to receptive repentance. Mark these two words (receptive repentance) for we shall have important use for them. Receptivity is a responsibility emphasized by Christ and his apostles but much ignored now, probably because of Calvinistic teachings of spiritual paralysis and predestination.

"Repent; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Those who fancy a difference between "Kingdom of Heaven" and "Kingdom of God" are just ignorant of the fact that the word "Heaven" was substituted for "God" merely to accommodate the Jewish caution in pronouncing the name of God, lest it be spoken irreverently. Matthew, writing for Jews especially, met this situation. This is the only explanation needed. Some people insist on going out of the simple way of truth to find sacred mysteries. But that is a delusion from the realm of darkness which substitutes superstition for sense and hinders the way of light.

The key to Matthew's Gospel is in the object of his writing—to set forth the contrast between the old idea of a kingdom of earthly glory and the new one of a spiritual order, or dispensation. Therefore, early in the gospel he gives an account of the Messianic teachings known as the "Sermon on the Mount." Throughout this gospel the same emphasis holds, as in the kingdom parables.

The Beatitudes reveal in condensed form the essential character of the new Kingdom as in striking contrast to all worldly notions of royalty and aristocracy. The privileged among men are shown to be utterly ignored in the Kingdom of Heaven, while the lowly and despised of this world are the very elite of the highest Kingdom. The astonishment of the first hearers will be exceeded in the effect of a careful reading of the Beatitudes even today, after they have long been known and admired as fine literary sentiments, nice ideals and counsels of perfection, but disregarded and unpracticed, for most part, as actual principles of life. The full meaning of "my kingdom is not of this world" is hardly recognized even today. Study of the Beatitudes affords valuable information much needed in our perplexed and agitated



time. Let us make a simple inquiry into their text and meaning, doing just what the Lord advises when he says to ask, seek, knock—to investigate thoroughly. Failure to heed this simple advice explains much of the misunderstanding and little practice of real Christianity. It fosters and sustains all sectarianism and heresy. In our study we shall not undertake to bring out all the things included or suggested, but only a few of the most conspicuous items—enough to call attention to spiritual values unrecognized by dormant Christendom.

#### PECULIAR DISCARD OF BEATITUDES

Among the most significant, important and essential words of the Lord Jesus are those in John 17:3. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Knowledge comes largely through words. We know people by their talk as well as by their deeds. Jesus showed the Father by doing the works assigned and by teaching the words of God (John 17:4-8). The Beatitudes are words most expressive of God, stating the fundamental principles of his sovereignty. These words show the mind of God in the clearest and most explicit manner. It is very strange that certain who claim to be Fundamentalists discard the most fundamental teachings of the Gospel of the Kingdom, including the entire Sermon on the Mount. By a peculiar twist of interpretation they repudiate the Kingdom of Heaven for the present and postpone it until the second advent. Thus they corrupt the gospel and lay it aside for a long while; for the gospel of Christ is the gospel of the Kingdom. As there is only one gospel—the everlasting gospel—the postponers are doing without any gospel. What they preach for a gospel is "another gospel," omitting an essential part of the real gospel. Life and immortality

are brought to light in the gospel. Much of that light is in the Beatitudes. Failure to receive and apply them in full meaning explains much of the failure so manifest in Christendom today.

Instead of the Kingdom being postponed, Jesus said that it was to be taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles who would appreciate it and develop it—bring forth the fruits of its principles into social realization (Matt. 21:43). How could the Gentiles bring forth the fruits of the Kingdom, if it was discarded or postponed until the second advent? Bringing forth the fruits of the Kingdom means that it is an inner spiritual power, just as Jesus declared, not a literal world-monarchy as Jews and futurists insist. The working out of that inner power results in a heavenly condition on earth—a very different thing from the catastrophic establishment desired, therefore predicted, by postponers. These are not bringing forth the fruits of the Kingdom, so are full of the pessimism of unbelief.

After the resurrection Jesus continued to talk with his apostles about the Kingdom, not about a church as a substitute until the second advent. He made no new program, and it is presumption for man to do so. The apostle Paul, years later, went everywhere preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, not the church as its temporary substitute. Some futurists are frank enough to admit that they have no scriptural basis, but infer their doctrine. The very word "church" is a political term, and has no existence apart from the Kingdom. The Greek "*ecclesia*" (translated "church") was a political term applied to legally called assemblies of citizens for deliberative action, advisory or administrative, in behalf of public interests. The term is used in the New Testament to designate Christians as a body for administering Christ's Kingdom during his absence, not as a



temporary substitute for the Kingdom. Christ is now King, so has a present Kingdom. Believers are already translated into the Kingdom of Christ—a present reality and not a prospect only (Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28). In Col. 3:11 the apostle stated that certain men were his fellow-workers in regard to the Kingdom of God. But if the Kingdom was postponed what were they doing with it? Can the postponers infer?

The Beatitudes are a vital part of the teaching of Jesus. They are among the essentials which he says we must keep if we are his followers. To shelve the sermon on the mount is to shelve him who uttered it while waiting for a more "convenient season."

When Jesus concluded his address on the mountain he said that whoever obeys those teachings is wise, but failure to follow is foolishness. Postponers are foolish until they repent. Eternal principles apply now.

When Jesus commissioned his apostles to proclaim the gospel throughout the world he said: "All power is given to me in heaven and upon earth." Therefore he is king now, and his laws are in force. The sermon on the mount is living truth today, not held over for future use only. The apostles were to teach disciples to keep *whatsoever* Jesus had commanded them, of which the sermon on the mount was an important part.

In 1 John 4:17 we read "As he is (in heaven), so are we in this world." Jesus has eternal life. *He is living truth.* Here and now his disciples partake of his nature as incarnate truth. All the principles of the Beatitudes inhere in Christ and in his true disciples. Postponers reject this fellowship in Christ. Nowhere does Scripture intimate a new application of the gospel at the second advent. Postponers need to repent.

In Acts 2:36 the apostle Peter said: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has

made that same Jesus whom you have crucified both Lord and Christ." The Jewish thought of Messiah was of a political trend—he was to be ruler of the nation. Peter emphasized the fact that Jesus was exalted to the place of real ruler; the universal ruler, not a local king of one nation. "Lord" was at that time a title of the Roman emperor. "Messiah" (*Christos* in Greek) had that significance in Hebrew, as the anointed one. So Jesus was shown by the signs at Pentecost to have fulfilled the old prophecies of a coming Messiah to be the Davidic ruler. Peter spoke in the present tense. Jesus is *now* God's appointed ruler of Israel and of the world. Futurists dispute some most emphatic statements of the New Testament. Christ's commandments, including the sermon on the mount, are now universally in force. Disregard of them is fatal even to those who claim to be full Fundamentalists loving the Lord. "If you love me, keep my commandments" is the test of genuineness. Postponers prove lack of love by not observing the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus said it was better for him to leave the world personally, and to send the Holy Spirit to develop and perfect the kingdom program. Greater things could be accomplished with him in heaven and the Spirit on earth (John 14:12 and 16:7 sq.). The postponement fancy contradicts Christ's direct words, and insults the Holy Spirit with imputation of inefficiency. Such unbelief is like that of the Jews in rejection of Messiah who came as promised. It is rejection of the kingdom program as provided by the Lord himself. Such unbelief hinders much the progress of Christianity.

Futurists say that ancient prophecies of the Messianic Kingdom are not yet fulfilled (as do the Jews), in face of emphatic Scripture declaring the fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus Christ. He said that the old



prohecies were *until John*, after whom he took up the program personally. He announced that he brought the Kingdom of Heaven; that it fulfilled the ancient aspirations and hopes; that the predicted time had come; that the eyes that saw what was going on by his administration were blessed, for they saw what prophets had longed for and talked of (Luke 10:23,24 and 16:16). Preaching the Kingdom of God supplanted prophecy, as it fulfilled all, and eager people pressed into it. Many misguided people now think they are at the peak of piety when they attend "Prophetic Conferences" that contradict Christ by denying that he fulfilled certain prophecies, saying that the Kingdom will not come until the second advent, so nobody can enter it now. Those whom Jesus reported as pressing into the Kingdom were much too premature. They got ahead of our futurists who shut the doors! And the Lord stood by without a word of remonstrance or warning; he even invited all tired and troubled ones to come to him for rest. If worried futurists would get some of Christ's optimism and believe his word, they would be wiser and happier.

Jesus said to repent and believe the gospel that he preached, which was that of the Kingdom—the only one there is. "Gospel"—good news that what prophets had promised was present. Futurism is a heresy. The notion that Christ will set up (start) his Kingdom in a spectacular way at his second coming contradicts Luke 17:20,21. The Kingdom being silently *within*, there is no place for the spectacular. Some try to escape this by reading "among you" instead of "within you," so twisting a text to fit a prejudice. The Greek *entos* (in the original) means *within*, and not among. It occurs in only one other place in the New Testament—Matt. 23:26 (*within* the cup). The Greek *mesos* is the word for "among," or "in the midst," so used throughout

the New Testament—which has no hobby to ride. As against the notion of a violent spectacular setting up of the Kingdom, see also Matt. 24:23; John 6:15 and 18:36. Not only did the Jews fail to perceive and appreciate the proposition of a spiritual government, but they even tried to put carnal meanings on the spiritual teachings of Jesus—which he reproved. It is Judaistic now to interpret the Kingdom of God as a world-empire with a local headquarters and a materialistic administration. But Jesus and his apostles taught a spiritual administration. "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink (material matters); but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these (spiritual things) serves Christ (as Lord) is acceptable to God, and approved of men (Rom. 16:17,18). After the Jews rejected Christ, he continued to confer with his apostles about the Kingdom without making a change in its message [Acts 1:3]. Paul preached that same gospel [Acts 19:8; 28:23,31].

What is the gospel? Good news; glad tidings. Luke 2:10,11 states it clearly. "Glad tidings of great joy, *for* unto you is born." Now note: The gospel is an announcement of fact with its correlative truth—something formerly looked for but now realized. Gospel succeeds prophecy. It is not another prophecy. It tells of the coming of a born king, not a made king. And nowhere is mention of this king abdicating while any church dispensation is substituted. But we do read of mischief done by enemies who try to spoil the reign until the end of the world, when a drastic clean-up will be made. Against futurism note that Rev. 1:5,6,9 are in the present tense—who *is* the Prince of the kings of the earth, and *has* made us kings; who *am* your brother *in the kingdom . . . of Jesus Christ*. This being true when John wrote, present futurism is false. "Blessed



*are*” is the testimony of Jesus Christ in the Beatitudes spoken on the mountain. There is no assurance to any who ignore and postpone until the second advent.

The assurance of Jesus Christ in the triumph of his Church endorsed the prophecy of Isaiah :

It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it.

In the Old Testament, the expression “the last days” commonly referred to the last days of the Mosaic dispensation, when the old regime would be displaced by the new order of the Messianic kingdom, or rule—the gospel dispensation as we term it. In Jewish thought, the house of the Lord was associated with Mount Zion—high and conspicuous. So, in oriental figurative style, this prophecy meant that, in the times of Messiah, the true worship of God would be made even more prominent than was the Jewish temple-worship. It would be more conspicuous than all other kinds of worship, so as to attract even the nations of the world, which Judaism did not do—a fitting description of Christianity as an expression of the Kingdom of Heaven. The prophecy does not apply to any material Mount Zion or to any final re-establishment of the Jewish temple-worship in Jerusalem, as some say. In asserting that the literal temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem when Christ comes again, his own positive words are ignored: “Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall men worship the Father”—places are not sacred, but human hearts. To restore place-piety is the wish of those who have a form of godliness without its power; who do not worship in spirit and in truth—humbug Christians. To restore the localized worship would annul the work of Jesus Christ as redeemer and establisher of the new creation. The new creation, or new birth, admits at once, not at some

See Acts 20: 24, 25.

future time, into the Kingdom of Heaven—the realm or sphere of eternal life. Before some Judeo-Christians can ever recognize, let alone enter, the Kingdom of Heaven they must repent (change the mind or attitude) in regard to Christ's teachings and works. They must repent of their Judaistic literalism, and believe the real gospel—the good news of the Kingdom. They must accept what Jesus and the apostles said about it, not what prejudiced and stupid Rabbinism imagines. They must quit the notion of two gospels—one of the Kingdom and the other of grace. The expression "gospel of grace" is only incidental in Scripture, the same as "gospel of peace" and other descriptives. To make it mean a substitute for the original gospel of the Kingdom is crass stupidity. Yet it is done by a cult whose zeal is not according to knowledge, but is misled into a futuristic "Fundamentalism." That no other gospel succeeded the gospel of the Kingdom is proven by the words of the Lord, himself, in Matt. 24: 14:—

This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

What can postponers do with this? Will they reject it?

#### REPENTANCE AND BEATITUDES

Repentance is a positive, because necessary, condition for the recognition, acceptance and efficiency of the Beatitudes. Only by a mind changed in its attitudes is it possible to appreciate and receive for life-principles the truths of Matt. 5: 3-12. This applies to the natural mind without comment. And it applies to the mind unnaturally biased with perverted religious notions in greater degree needing emphatic attention. The wise will consider and respond.

In the time of Christ the leaders of the people were mostly mere subtle disputers of legal perversions, even



caricatures, utterly without sympathy for the people or true honor towards God, but devoted to self-interests. Their conception of the Kingdom of Heaven was that of "a miraculous, heaven-instituted, absolute rule of rabbis." (Edersheim). Rabbinism tended in an anti-messianic direction. Among the people were some who held better ideas, but of a very imperfect and nebulous kind. Even in the synagogues a perverted emphasis of literal legalism fostered a spurious piety of pride, self-seeking and hollow show, or sham.

Politically, Judea was under the yoke of Rome, and influenced to some extent by the ruinous moral, social and religious perversions of that empire nearly ripe for the harvest of destruction. Roman conditions had about reached their limit of evil. The Jews maintained some resistance to the prevailing corruption, but the air was full of the vicious miasma of pagan pollution. Something must be done in radical change or the world must tumble to complete ruin. It was at the very hour of hopeless prospect that the announcement of Messiah's arrival surprised the world. It was surely the fullness of times. "When we were without strength"—when despair was everywhere, the Star of Hope appeared.

But darkness challenged hope. The term "Kingdom of Heaven" was long familiar to Jewish usage, but not at all properly comprehended. Aspirations there were, and "ideals," but failing to reach beyond the material. Relief was earnestly longed for, but relief from mere outward conditions. The kingdom of Jewish hope was one of physical power and plenty, with the sword as the instrument of conquest and maintenance. Rabbinic literature, indeed, used as equivalents the terms "Kingdom," "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven," with some idea of contrast to earthly things, yet failing to perceive the real spiritual content and application.



The expression of that kingdom was expected with the advent of the Messiah. But its recognition and appreciation were out of range of the natural mind, however aspiring. As Jesus told Nicodemus, one can not even see or enter into the Kingdom of Heaven without a new birth. Spiritual things can be perceived and realized only by spiritual minds. John Baptist's work of purification (baptism, conditioned on repentance) opened the way for the new birth of the spirit by the Spirit.

"REPENT" was a call not only to renounce the past but to adopt a new attitude towards the future, particularly to the coming Kingdom of Heaven. In himself the Baptist was a suggestive expression of the unworldliness of the announced new order. Without blare of trumpets, without weapons of violence, without insignia of royalty, without showy retinue, without even apparel of pomp, but in quiet, simple, unpretentious modesty the Herald merely spoke the brief message "Repent; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Then, effacing self, he told of One who would follow bringing the new reign of righteousness.

And when the Messiah came the same unpretentious modesty marked his bearing and procedure. Tempted by the Devil to adopt the grand ways of this world and to use spectacular demonstrations of super-royalty, he spurned the suggestions, and quietly and simply proceeded along spiritual lines pertaining to heavenly life to be inaugurated among men. The showy panorama of grandeur, pomp, power and plenty; the glitter and clash of arms; the loyal armies of men; the hustle and bustle of cities filled with factories, commerce and traffic; the enticements of art, music and drama—all the proud ceremonies of "civilization"—failed to divert the young Messiah from the path of simple, confident obedience to the eternal Spiritual which he knew to be the

only Real, True and Good. He had to preface his message with the call to repent; for the new order was not possible to any but those whose minds were free from prejudice and deliberately disposed towards the right.

#### REPENTANCE AND CRITICISM

The call to repent was a criticism of prevailing thought and conduct. Jesus was no modern slacker afraid to offend by criticism, which has a proper and necessary place in all educative processes. Resentment towards criticism means stubborn pride unwilling to be corrected or to acknowledge fault—truth is not wanted. But the most critical critics are those who criticise critics. They prate about destructive and constructive criticism when all they want or will tolerate is a pat on the back and a stick of candy with an ice-cream cone as a settler. In trying to destroy destructive critics they make themselves whimpering critics. They ignore the fact that construction must often be preceded by destruction. In house-building the ground must first be cleared. Gold requires melting of ore—destructive criticism. Farmers criticise fields by destroying trees and weeds before any planting is done. Before Jesus Christ could establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth he had to do some destructive criticising. The axe had to be laid to the roots of bad institutions; wrong attitudes of mind had to be corrected; old prejudices had to be uprooted; sinful conduct had to be stopped. Under some conditions the most friendly, the most kindly, thing to do is to criticise. If I should see a man driving his car in the wrong direction, especially if in a dangerous place, my best act is to stop him and criticise his conduct—tell him his error. I destroy his self-assurance as to his direction and spoil all the satisfaction he has had while driving in the wrong way. Does he snarl at me like a



cur, denouncing me for treating him with such horrid discourtesy; such destructive criticism? Does he not, rather, thank me and at once correct his course?

Should teachers object to criticism of school methods by the better educated and more experienced? They are, themselves, most critical. They criticise their pupils continually, pointing out blunders and insisting on changes in behaviour. Yet they are often very sensitive against criticism of themselves, and denounce those who point out the errors of current educational processes. What is back of these will somewhat appear in this study of the Beatitudes.

Criticism is not so horrid as many fancy. The word is from the Greek, signifying primarily discriminative judgment based on knowledge or understanding. Real criticism is discernment, not fault-finding. Discernment sees the difference between the proper and improper. It must dispose of the improper before it can establish the proper. Right and wrong can not mix. Wrong must be condemned by any who have integrity. Consent to wrong proves lack of integrity. Those who resent even destructive criticism show lack of integrity—they *will not* have or do the right. In Heb. 4:12 we read that the word of God is a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"—it is a critic. That is why many do not read the Bible—they are not willing to be re-proved and corrected. They *want* to think and act unrighteously; they enjoy evil. It was because Jesus criticised the world (testifying that its conduct was evil) that the world hated him. He told his disciples to expect similar treatment, if they gave such criticism. No preacher is popular yet who declares all truth plainly. Criticism is a friend to all who are willing to be and do right. Not only generally is this true, but within the church it is imperative for mutual benefit. Christians



are even commanded to admonish, reprove, rebuke—to criticise—one another; not for hurt but for protection against mistakes and delusions. All real Christians welcome such criticism; for they want to be guided in the way of truth. No one can be a disciple of Christ unless he takes up his cross daily—crucifixion of self. Criticism is an important part of the process.

He that reproves a scorner gets to himself shame: and he that rebukes a wicked man gets himself a blot. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate you: rebuke a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. —Prov. 9:7-9.

He is in the way of life that keeps instruction: but he that refuses reproof errs. —Prov. 10:17.

Resentment of criticism is hostility to God's word; for

All Scripture, being God-inspired, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Correction involves criticism. If we endure such, we are sons of God, having his nature. If we resent, we are bastards, having a spurious piety. Sons are of the truth; bastards, of falsehood and deception.

Jesus repeated the term "Blessed," but preceded it for some time with "Repent." Only after correction by criticism could he offer the opportunity and hope of attaining the supreme good. The inherent truths of the Beatitudes certainly criticise many notions and customs that are prevalent today. Their observance would soon revolutionize society, so that all would seem to be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness.

#### MEANING OF REPENTANCE

"REPENT" is a much larger word than is commonly supposed. It does not mean mere emotional sorrow for past personal wrong acts. That is likely to be only a passing psychic impulse under pressure. There are three

Greek words meaning "repentance." One, *metagnoia*, means "discovery afterwards," so suggesting change of attitude and conduct as proper.

Another, *metameleia*, means regret for wrong, with a feeling of compunction to reverse conduct. This is the usual idea of repentance, derived from the Roman church, and supposed to be Biblical. [Read with care here; for the matter is important]. When the New Testament was translated from Greek into Latin, the three Greek words were all rendered by *pœnitentia*, the Latin for "repentance," that language not having other words to express the subtle Greek distinctions. The Latin verb and adjective, of course, correspond, and the Latin words carry the idea of sorrow or grieving. The Roman church fell into the superstition of adding the idea of a punishment for sin when repented of with sorrow, and called it "penance." That word was coined in pagan stupidity from the word for repentance. The Christian assurance of forgiveness following repentance excludes such punishment. The Greek word *poinee* (penalty) is from the same Sanscrit original as the Latin word, *but that word does not appear in the Greek New Testament*. The doctrine of penance is a heresy. The Greek noun *metameleia* (repentance) does not occur in the New Testament at all. The verbal form *metamelomai* occurs only five times, but not in this connection. Emotional repentance is not Christian repentance. True emotions follow real repentance, not dictate it.

The third and most used Greek word for repentance in the New Testament is *metanoia*, meaning to deliberately and intelligently change the mind or purpose with reference to opinion and consequent conduct. This is the word used both by John Baptist and Jesus Christ. So Biblical repentance is a sincere, positive determination to reverse oneself in the light of information, not from



excited emotional impulse. So Jesus commissioned his apostles to *teach*, not to "hold revival meetings".

"Repent; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" meant to change opinion and practice in reference to God and his service, especially in regard to the person, teaching and work of Jesus, the Messiah. This is its peculiar force and application in the gospels, although not excluding reference to individual morality.

Inquiry into the notions and practices that made up Jewish religious and civil life brings out the urgent need of such change in both opinion and conduct, particularly in view of what Christ taught to be the essential nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. A large book would be required to present any full account of this. Readers will be well repaid in going through the large volumes of Edersheim's "*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*", if they have not already read them. We may not go into any fullness here when such books are so available. There is much need of repentance in this sense even now in the usual poor conception of the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven and the life therein. Edersheim says:

Judaism could understand a new relationship towards God and man, and even the forgiveness of sins. But it had no conception of a moral renovation, a spiritual birth, as the initial condition for reformation, far less as that for seeing the kingdom of God. And it was because it had no idea of such "birth from above", of its reality or even possibility, *that Judaism could not be the Kingdom of God.*

The italics in this quotation are supplied to emphasize the statement made above that Christianity is not any evolution from Judaism, which lacked the life germ and was only a temporary kindergarten expedient, as Paul emphasizes so much, but which few people ever seem to see. The carnal Jews saw not the spiritual. So the reiterated call to change their minds. Same call now.



The spiritual mind sees truth directly. Only a carnal mind needs symbols, illustrations, parables, stories, as children use kindergarten toys. But Paul said that men should put away childish things. Jesus said that parables were used with stupid people who did not deserve direct statements which they would misinterpret and misuse. When he tried to teach the wonderful truth about eating his flesh and drinking his blood the people saw only cannibalism, which he rebuked. The fiction of transubstantiation in the Eucharist makes it only a magic cannibalism—a worse stupidity than the other. The incarnation is the basic element in redemption. As an offering for sin, the broken body and shed blood of Christ must be accepted by us, and, spiritually, we are to be identified with him in his incarnate experiences. As our bodies are nourished by food and drink, so are our souls nourished by assimilating faith in Jesus Christ as incarnate God. We become partakers of the divine nature so as to live in this world without being conformed to its thinking or behaviour. Fashion followers do not feed upon spiritual food. Truth, not fiction, is our food. Novels have no place in God's Kingdom. It is notable here that our Lord practices spiritualization in disregard of its denunciation by futurists who hold that literalism applies to kingdom teachings.

#### UNIQUE KINGDOM

The spiritual kingdom is very much unlike any human conception; much more unlike any earthly establishment. Flesh can never become spirit. Spirit can never compromise with flesh. Flesh must die. Spiritual evolution by fleshly development is a fancy of fools who are blind to essential contrasts. Quoting Edersheim again:

Man may rise to high possibilities—mental, even moral: self-development, self-improvement, self-restraint; submission to a grand idea of a higher law; refined moral egotism; esthetic, even

moral, altruism. But to see the *Kingdom of God*: to understand what means the absolute rule of God, the one high calling of our humanity, by which a man becomes a child of God—to perceive this, not as an improvement upon our present state, but as the submission of heart, mind and life to Him as our Divine King, an existence which is, and which means, proclaiming unto the world the Kingship of God: this can only be learned from Christ, and needs even for its perception a kinship of spirit—for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

The Kingdom of Heaven, as set forth in the teaching of Jesus Christ (we emphasize by repetition) is a complete reversion of the fondest notions and hopes of the Jews. It is neither development nor reformation of any old religion or philosophy, but presented a new light. This fact is, incidentally, a denial and reproof of the foolish notion that Jesus was a product of his time, and his teachings only an adaptation and development of what he found at hand. How should a poor boy in an obscure village and without schooling have access to materials which only university scholars would have known or could have used? They would have been alert to use such materials. How came Jesus to be the only one to respond to his alleged environment? Why were there not several such developments? Why was Jesus the only man who ever spoke as he did? The very fact that he called to repentance—to a change of mind—is proof that his doctrines and practices were not derived from environment. Had they been, he would have exhorted to respond to it, not to follow a path directly contrary.

True, indeed, the Jews waited for the Kingdom of God, which was foretold by the ancient prophets. But their stupid minds did not conceive of that Kingdom as "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," expressed in holy living. They just thought of meat and drink, with all prosperity and victories over enemies—



a kingdom with miraculous wilderness-banquets to Israel, and coarse miraculous triumphs over the Gentiles. . . . The fruit trees were every day, or at least every week or two, to yield their riches, the fields their harvests; the grain was to stand like palm trees, and every produce of every clime would be found in Palestine in such abundance and luxuriance as only the wildest imagination could conceive. —*Edersheim*.

When Jesus did not supply such a program, but offered a new spiritual life of fellowship with himself as the Way, the Truth and the Life, people were disappointed and refused to accept him as Messiah. They did not want that kind of a king, nor such a kingdom.

It would be interesting to note here how much the modern situation reproduces the ancient one in misconceptions about the Kingdom of Heaven in its earth expression. But repetition will be avoided by holding the several items for comment as each principle comes into consideration. We shall see several contradictions between the basic principles announced by Jesus Christ and modern interpretations and applications of highest things. We shall find how emphatically still sounds the call to repent—to change the mind, the attitude, the purpose in life, as a condition of recognizing, appreciating and accepting Jesus as the Christ, and entering the Kingdom of Heaven. This is why we have given such emphasis to the item of repentance.

#### KINGDOM OF THE BLESSED

"And seeing the crowds he went up into a mountain." The crowds followed because of the healings. Public interest was in temporal welfare. Jesus had compassion for all sufferers. But he had a more important work than healing bodies. He wanted, above all, to heal souls. That necessitated the changing of men's thinking and doing. Teaching was of special importance. Truth must be known before it can be done. Tumult is not



favorable to teaching or learning. Noisy street corners are not good pulpits, nor are distracting city environments good college campuses. Moses went up onto a mountain to be alone with God, to receive the Law. The truth of the new order could best come in quiet. There was a marked difference, however, between the schools of Mount Sinai and of the mountain by the sea. The crowd was fenced away from Sinai, but was permitted to climb the other mountain and come near to God in Christ, and to listen to what was said to the disciples. The universal truth of the Sermon on the Mount is in quite different garb from that of the special message to a select people for a particular purpose. Immanuel (God with us) changed the whole program of revelation. If the legal institution was so glorious that Moses had to veil from the people the shining of his face, how great should be the appreciation of the new order in which the grace of God is expressed, the veil being discarded because God was incarnate in Jesus Christ. If the law of God by Moses made men shudder from fear, the love in Christ should make them responsive with affection. The law was to be heeded. Much more should grace and truth be appreciated and accepted. The veil is taken away in the sermon on the mount, so the way of God is plain. The very first word spoke encouragement, showing the kind attitude of God—"Blessed."

Jesus was talking to his disciples, preparing them to teach the world. But the Kingdom of Heaven is not a secret society, and the curious crowd was permitted to listen in. It is not reported what response was made beyond astonishment. Although no fee was charged, nor pass-word collected, there was some test of interest—the crowd had to climb the mountain. A "Gospel Mission" near by has two outlying stations only three blocks apart. My inquiry brought an explanation that

folks will not walk far, so meetings have to be held at near places! All of God's truth is free, but given to those who are interested enough to turn aside from the distractions of the world and give attention. No tuition or fees are charged in the school of Christ, but we must deny our own pleasures and worldly desires to be able to receive, perceive and use the knowledge offered.

#### KINGDOM OF THE BLESSED

THE Kingdom of Heaven is not a system of arbitrary control of subjected beings conquered by force and held in political bonds. It is the rule of God in the hearts and lives of voluntary beings who aspire to godliness, and who, accepting the grace (free gift) of God, become partakers of his nature in the new birth of the spirit by the Spirit. The laws of the Kingdom of Heaven are not arbitrary ordinances enacted and posted for public attention and guidance. They were never written on stone tablets like the temporary Mosaic code. They are the essential principles of the Divine Nature itself. Received into simple, honest hearts, they become the lasting, even eternal, attitude of mind and spontaneous prompter of conduct. The reception of these principles necessitates a positive change in attitude from the carnal and earthly to the spiritual and heavenly; from the world-rudiments of legalism to the exaltation of godliness in thought and purpose.

The Sermon-on-the-Mount is the setting forth of the new order. Of this, the first section (the Beatitudes) comprises the fundamental principles, on which the remainder is largely comment, unfoldment and application. In considering the Beatitudes we learn the most surprising things about real life—life as God knows it and as he wants us to know it. We are face-to-face with God; for, in Christ, God reveals himself. All that



is contrary to these is not of life, but of death, delusion and destruction. Bear this in mind as we study each Beatitude. These principles are not for later application in some future world, only. They are eternal and for present use; for, in Christ, we become partakers of the Divine Nature—eternal. God's will is the expression of his essential nature, to operate on earth as well as in heaven—throughout the universe. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Made in the image of God, man was intended to live as he does, as defined in the Beatitudes.

"Blessed are," not blessed will be, reads the text. The word "blessed" is far more significant than is usually understood. Jesus did not say that certain ones will be blessed hereafter. He said "are," right here and now and forever. The blessedness he mentioned is not a bestowal of good in response to a condition of mind. It is not something to be earned. It is not a "reward of merit" or a tribute of praise. If this were intended, the Greek word would have been *Eulogeemenoi* (whence our "eulogy"), as in Matt. 25:34 and Eph. 1:3. But it is a simple, direct statement of actual existing *condition*. It is not a promise or prediction, but an announcement of fact—spiritual reality.

Modern rabbinism has stifled the life of truth with perverted emphasis on more perverted texts of Scripture until this supremely important portion is regarded more as beautiful sentiment than as actual life-principles. Surprises await our perusal. Not pretty ideals or nice counsels of perfection are the Beatitudes. They bring us into most wonderful and real fellowship with God in his Kingdom as we apply our hearts to their reception and observance. They are also practical and possible now, not reserved for any "millennial" period of special perfection. The real millennium has quite a



different bearing from the popular notion. When the Lord Jesus brought the Kingdom of Heaven to men he pledged power to live its life by regeneration and help from the Holy Spirit. Regeneration puts us into the Kingdom. There is no more basis for the notion of a postponement of the Kingdom, with its Beatitudes and other teachings, than for saying that regeneration is postponed until the second advent. The Beatitudes, we repeat, are in the present tense as are all essentials of the immortal state which knows no limitations.

So we need to emphasize that, in our study of the Beatitudes, we are learning the spiritual laws of life—immortality. We are learning the essence of Divine Character, appropriating which by our own hearts, we become transformed into Godlike persons—the supreme work of redemption. In every detail we shall find the study most interesting and helpful. Every sincere student will find corrective, therefore helpful and valuable instruction. Blessed are they who find and hold truth.

#### THE IMMORTALS

Ancient life was largely a search for happiness, and a happiness that was uncertain and disappointing because it was only a play with temporal pleasures that soon cloyed and vanished. Real and satisfying happiness, the enduring pleasure, is only in the things of the spirit that bring inner satisfaction in having eternal reality. Only the happiness of immortality can satisfy the human soul made in the image of God. When the ancient world was hopeless, all its experiments for happiness and peace having failed, then the voice of the Son of God spoke aloud, disclosing the only real life in partaking of the Divine Nature. When philosophers guessed and longed for the golden past that never returned, the Carpenter Boy of Nazareth said: "Blessed." "*Blessed are.*" Not

were nor will be, but now are, were words that opened a new and startling mystery to all who listened. The same message comes now to every open heart.

"BLESSED." The word *makarioi* in the original Greek text indicates not something to be bestowed on consideration but an inherent quality, a fortunate disposition or attitude or condition, for which congratulations are due—a state of real inherent happiness. Even stronger is the meaning. It is made from two words, *mee* (not) and *kur* (fate, or death). So the *makarioi*, or the blessed, are those who partake of the deathless or eternal nature. They have in themselves the immortal quality—they are like God. They belong in the Kingdom of Heaven. The several items in the list of the Beatitudes describe qualities that pertain to the Divine Nature. To know who are the blessed is to know who are THE IMMORTALS. It is a most interesting and profitable study we have undertaken.

THE BLESSED. *The Immortals*. Who are they? What are they like? What is their character? What does God say about it? How does he describe himself? What does he look for in us? What will he work in us if we will let him, in the process of salvation? The meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven becomes luminously marvelous as we look at the things which comprise the state of Blessedness—IMMORTALITY. From the very first item we see the need of repentance—changing the mind as to what is desirable and worthy, so much in contradiction of our natural inclinations—the selfish attitude of the world-spirit. The very first proposition is a complete surprise, a direct and emphatic reversal of human attitude and practice. One can not mention, much less discuss, the first Beatitude without criticism of the most glaringly conspicuous perversion that impudently rules much of the world today. It works everywhere. Our



boasting civilization glories in it and trusts it as the great guiding-star of progress. Our schools promote it as the prime incentive to a misdirected substitute for an education. Even our religious agencies make large use of it in their undertakings. Some will resent all such criticisms just as such persons resented Jesus Christ's, and hated him because of them. But criticism of evil is a kindness to those in danger. Blindness to the situation and proud stubbornness resent criticism, to suffer and lament when too late. Teachers who resent such denounce criticism affecting them! Pharisees still infest this earth. This message is for those who are wise enough to appreciate the spiritual.

"You must be born again" appears with a striking emphasis as we study the very A-B-C of the Kingdom of Heaven. The hope and assurance of regeneration for all real believers is the warrant for teaching such unworldly lessons as the Beatitudes.



## THE POOR IN SPIRIT

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*Blessed are the poor in spirit;  
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

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NOT commandments, even strictly obeyed, are the vital need, but heart attitudes. The rule within—the voluntary, spontaneous attitude—is the rule of Heaven, the Kingdom of God. Simple, practical, constant condition of mind and heart is the real thing—not philosophy, not ceremonies, with all their show of wisdom and zeal. Not proud strutters who look down upon others and are looked up to by them are approved of God. Sheep, not peacocks, symbolize God's people. The proud ceremonious Jews were offended in Jesus for such stupid and simple ways as he had and taught—in their opinion. It is not at all strange that the preliminary call was unto repentance—change of mind or attitude—as necessary to reception of the Kingdom of Heaven. That insignificant upstart from Nazareth, little mean village; the man without a diploma, who never even went to common school, and (Would you believe it?) without any degree, not even having "Rev." before his name; his supposed father nothing but a carpenter; his name not in "Who's Who;" associate of fishermen, publicans and outcasts; without even an old flivver to ride in, so had to hike the highways and byways; could not afford a hotel, so had to sleep on the ground out in the public park—what right had he to so contradict all tradition and world-practice? By what authority did he speak and act? It was a new, strange proposition to those

people and to the world. What about now? Just as strange and just as contrary to world-notions as then, when we take a square look at the word "poor."

The Greek is *ptochoi*, from the verb *ptosso*, meaning to crouch as from fear; to creep from house to house in begging; to shrink, tremble with fear (like the poor outcasts of India); to be timid, non-assertive and non-resistant. The word came to mean, also, the beggarly poor. It was used to designate those of an oppressed country who dared not rise in rebellion, retaliation or revolution. Jesus did not use the word in its severely primitive sense, but in the general idea of modesty and humility, as in contrast to pride and bold assertiveness. Blessed are such people; for *of such* is the Kingdom of Heaven. Some folk will not want to go there, to be in such company! They need not worry; for they have not the qualification of humility necessary to enter. God is, himself, meek and lowly in heart, not conceited or boastful. His voice is the still, small one, not the noisy and harsh roar of a bullying tyrant. Not with blare of band, beat of drum, or excited shout is God most honored, but with quiet, gentle, humble, loving, faithful obedience such as only the poor in spirit are capable of rendering. Braggarts, especially, are excluded.

Self-estimate is the essence of the matter. . . . Only the noble think meanly of themselves. The soul of goodness is in the man who is really humble. —*Bruce*, in *Expos. Greek Testament*.

This is not a future possibility, only, but a present reality. It is our very present inner self that, having the humble disposition, is blessed, happy, fortunate, to be congratulated—not gets a blessing, but is blessed in itself, *immortal* in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Jews despised small things: the poor, the feeble, the non-assertive—everything having an "inferiority complex." But Jesus commended the *little* children (not old) and



said that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. Indeed, he even said that no one can enter that realm without becoming humble like a little child. Humility must be a self-directed attitude. It is not an imposed virtue. No magic produces it. Divine sovereignty does not bestow it outright. Scripture emphasizes human responsibility for self-humiliation. "Humble yourselves" is the significant language.

Where are the poor in spirit today, even where there is much boasting of Christian achievement? They are not so numerous as to blockade our streets, overflow our schools, or even crowd our churches. If Jesus Christ were to visit us in person, his first word would need to be "Repent." There never was more need to change the mind regarding what is worthy and acceptable in the sight of God. The spirit of immortality does not pervade the conspicuous phases of the modern world's life. The vaporous quality of most of the present-day thought and activity is very conspicuous when compared with the word of God, which commends the very things which the world despises—modesty, humility, self-denial, obedience, service.

The world is proud even of its occasional decency. It swells out when sometimes quitting its meanness, and celebrates with pomp and parade where it should hang its head in shame. It pats itself on the back for doing what it should not have had occasion to do. It fights until exhausted, then makes a truce and thereafter celebrates with applause the armistice—proud because it quit what it never should have done. Then it contradicts its own show of virtue in pledged peace by great diligence in preparing for a bigger butchery—the old hypocrite. Doing right is only normal, calling for no praise (Luke 17:10), while shame adheres to the wrong until honestly repented of. Honest repentance does not

prepare for bigger battles. Humility, poverty of spirit that vaunts not itself, is so far above the world's conception that the very first Beatitude can not be used nor even appreciated, without the new birth from above.

### SELF-EXPRESSION

Self-expression is the rage, even an obsession, of modern life. In school, in office, in shop, in society, in church—everywhere—self-expression is the big thing. That is the Devil's own formula. He worked it on Eve, and still works it on all flesh so far as he can. Don't take God's word for guidance. Don't be modest and humbly obedient. Don't follow authority or dictation. Be your own authority. Be sensible. Be independent. Just let your imagination lead you. Follow your own pleasure and judgment; your own opinions and evaluations right from your own observations. Be scientific enough to experiment. Express yourself, not somebody else's recommendations. Let God dictate to stupid angels in heaven, but here in Eden you are IT. Let me merely suggest that you take a closer look at that forbidden fruit, my fine lady, and just taste it. It will bring new revelations to you, making you wise as gods to know good and evil. You will thus be independent so as to do as you please instead of being tied by the restrictions God has imposed upon you. Don't be an inferior complex, but assert yourself and follow your inclinations. Today the same serpent-voice says: Do not hold to the old Gospel of Christ, but let some angel, spirit or shade of a departed friend reveal something new and more wonderful to you—Modernism, Spiritism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Bahaism, New Thought, Unity, Pentecostalism, Russellism, *et al* and *et cetera*.

Jesus Christ is now a back-number! He followed and commended a program of self-effacement instead of self-



expression. He did his Father's will, not his own. And he did so without questioning and trying to have his own way. Indeed, it was his wish and pleasure to do his Father's will. He has no contrary will. He is one with the Father. "I delight to do thy will, O God," is his attitude. Only as we thus hold ourselves a whole-offering unto God can we become conscious of the good and delightful and perfect will of God (Rom. 12:2). And Jesus taught what his Father taught him, not what he invented as an original philosopher. He did what his Father assigned for him, not what his fancy suggested or his inexperienced inclination prompted. He was so lacking in imagination, initiative, self-expression, that he was termed the exact impress of God. And it was this self-humiliation that wrought in him the glory he attained through suffering—the glory of a conquest that entitled him to be made King of kings and Lord of lords. We can share in that everlasting glory only as we follow the same path.

The apostle Paul was no advocate of self-expression or independent attitude. In Eph. 1:3, he shows the evil of following self-inclinations. He always emphasizes the need of following Christ as our individual aspiration and as head of the church.

They who live should no longer live unto themselves but unto him who died for them.

Casting down reasonings and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and leading captive every thought into the obedience of Christ.

For me to live is Christ (not self-expression).

None of us lives unto himself, and no man dies unto himself.

Love seeks not its own.

You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

There is no place for self-expression in the Christian

Way. Self is crucified by baptism into Christ, so that one seeks the things above with an earnestness that excludes self-seeking. The proper conduct of those who are of strong character and ability is stated in terms of duty in Rom. 15:13:

We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and *not to please ourselves*. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself.

Present-day emphasis on self-expression is very serious menace to real Christian culture. It thwarts every beginning, even, towards the really spiritual. Until the first principle of right (humility in obedience) is accepted and practiced it is senseless to expect any culture of real Christian character. Any religious zeal that fails to eliminate the carnal urge to self-expression is just a delusion and a humbug. The old school-room motto "Well begun is half done" applies here. The aim or direction decides the goal. Where selfishness guides godliness can not be attained. The present craze about ideals is a gesture of self-expression. Ideals are mere projections of personal picturesque fancies, without reality—mental idols. Making ideals the goal is merely modern idolatry. God is the real goal. Man was made in his image. Redemption restores the spoiled image. God's incarnate Son is the pattern to be followed. Jesus Christ, not ideals, is our aim. His nature is to become our new nature. "Until Christ be formed within" is Paul's explanation of real culture. And this, not the rapture, is our hope of glory.

The mind of Christ excludes the pride of self-expression. This was the stone on which the Jews especially stumbled. The humility of birth, the obscurity of life and, above all, the shame of the cross made a rock of offense they would not excuse. A proud Messiah full



of self-expression would have just suited them. The present stress on self-expression in educational and even religious activities is a very great hindrance to Christianity, yet done in the name of superior culture! Truly does Satan pose as a messenger of light! Jesus warned the Jews in this matter. "I am come in my Father's name, and you receive me not. If another shall come in his own name him you will receive." And it was so.

In this connection Jesus said: "I do not receive honor from men." And he added: "How can you believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only?" The explanation of the matter was: "You have not the love of God in you." So now the pride of self-seeking in self-expression is sure proof of lack of love towards God with all that means. "If you love me keep my commandments." The proof of love is not in talking, praying, singing, going to religious meetings, but in following Christ's teachings, of which humility unto self-contradiction is first and chief. The trend of modern life is very much away from the spiritual and Christly, as of the Kingdom of Heaven, so the call to repent is still in order—change of attitude. Proud ancients sometimes called their lands after their own names (Ps. 49:11), and proud moderns do likewise. Even proud "evangelists" call schools after their own names and profess to prepare proficient Christian workers therein! Modern religious advertising!!

Modern emphasis on self-expression as the way to perfection of attainment and culture is a form of that pride which repudiates salvation by grace (free gift) instead of by works. It means to ignore dependence upon God in blind confidence of self-sufficiency. Human notions are rated better guides than God's word. Even children are encouraged to express their own immature and ignorant whims instead of honoring parental coun-

~~self of parents.~~ Disobedience to parents is an express mark of impious degeneracy, an insolent fault. It is devilish defiance of responsibility to authority, making selfish caprice supreme. General lawlessness results until more than half of present jail population is said to be of youths under twenty-three years of age—due to emphasis on wayward self-expression. Some writers go so far as to intimate that parents should apologize to their children for having brought them into the world and then let the youngsters trample all over them. But they disregard the fact that parenthood is a Divine order and parents are required to control their offsprings for their own good. Such meddling teachers would, if consistent, blame God for creating man and putting any restriction on him. Yet some of the champions of the self-expression fad profess to be Christians!

This situation was described by the apostle Paul in 2 Tim. 3:1-5, where the list of evils starts with "men will be self-lovers." Self-love results in all mischief and wickedness in defiance of God and of human society. Even such freaks are described as having a form (semblance) of piety, but repudiating the power of it unto righteousness. Self-seeking is the very root of sin. It must be plucked out before one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Somebody once remarked: "An angel in heaven said 'I' and at once became a devil." Nobody who has the most elementary conception of real Christianity can cherish the self attitude. We must have the Christ-mind of self-subordination that finds pleasure in doing for others. "Look not every man on his own things (only), but also on the things of others." We must live—think and act—for the common welfare, not for mere self-interest. Selfishness has been called "the great disintegrating force in human life." Certain professedly advanced religionists try to take the cross out



of Christianity, crying out against blood-atonement and shouting for the Sermon-on-the-Mount as the one thing in the Bible worth considering. Yet they repudiate the very first sentence of that sermon! Humility, self-denial and obedience to another will are far from the modern notion of the good. But pride is a puffed-up condition of mind. A proud person is a bag of wind—a foolish vanity for which there is no room in the Kingdom of Heaven. "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Because of pride Satan fell from his high place in heaven.

The modern notion of seeking freedom of soul in the recognition of one's own personality by others is vain conceit. It is a form of self-deification. It substitutes self for God in unwillingness to be under authority; for that means humility. Self-righteousness despises the righteousness that is a gift from God in answer to faith in Jesus Christ as the God-man who redeems. That gift-righteousness is an impartation of God's own nature which the best self-effort can not attain. The humility that recognizes and acknowledges this is the very first essential for us in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Teaching self-expression in schools or elsewhere is positively antagonistic to, and preventive of, discipleship toward Jesus Christ. Sunday-schools are not exempt; for some of their practices violate fundamental principles of Christianity. "Train up a child in the way he should go" is the proper way still. Many grow up like weeds, to sprawl over the ground as it happens or as it pleases unguided notions. Helter-skelter living is the order of the day—whatever pleases fleeting fancy or carnal desire. Auto-cars left to self-direction instead of being *guided* are less dangerous or disastrous than are youngsters left to self-expression. Crashing, crushing, killing, and other mischief inevitably result. The climax

of folly in this direction seems to have been reached by the wife of a professor in Columbia University, who is reported as saying that her children (as those of many other families) are being brought up without hearing about God and religion, with this explanation:

To introduce a small child to the idea of an omnipotent Father may easily rob him of his self-dependence. He may form the habit of leaning on some person or power instead of growing up in the belief that he must meet and solve his problems as they arise. One might jeopardize the whole future happiness of a child by telling him that he is accountable to God for what he does and not to his own conscience.

Of course, she never tells a tot to keep away from any danger, but lets it play alone with matches in the library with papers cluttering the floor! She never tells a tot to keep off the street where mad drivers step on the gas while dreaming of their smartness—Oh no, not she; for that might jeopardize its whole future happiness (with broken legs or worse) by interfering with its ignorant conscience! Did anybody say "Fool woman?"

Devils as angels of light are certainly busy among titled teachers who exalt self-expression above sensible subordination to proper authority, especially to God. It is a direct reversion to ancient heathenism—in the name of Twentieth Century culture!! In his valuable book "The Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism" (page 144), Ullhorn makes a comment that fits right here:

For his moral life the pagan was referred wholly to himself. This is the reason why there was no virtue in which the ancient world was so deficient as humility. It was utterly incomprehensible to a Greek or a Roman, for such virtues as he possessed were self-acquired without divine aid. Therefore he was proud of them, and boasted of them even in comparison with the gods. The Stoics deemed themselves as good as the gods.

Cultivating self-assurance, while ignoring God, is sure to result in self-deification—the religion of Humanism in full expression. The trend of our day is toward the



rule of Seneca: "Admire only thyself." Marcus Aurelius, esteemed among the best emperors of ancient Rome, was a conspicuous example of self-direction. But he was a freak. Advocating tolerance even of the severely wicked as being only erring brothers who had somehow missed their "better selves," he said:

Men exist for the sake of one another. Teach them, then, or bear with them.

Yet he became one of the most violent persecutors of Christians. I, me, my, were the big words in his thought. Deified nature (his nominal religion) was of interest only as associated with "ME." Uihorn says:

Marcus Aurelius believed that he could realize his moral ideal by his own power. He believed in himself and at bottom in himself only.

How modern! In this direction do our educational activities largely run. Established and supported in the name of Christ, many of them, they are traitors to that name, teaching rank paganism as the "civilized" substitute for the Kingdom of Heaven. Self-crucifixion *versus* self-expression is the way to Divine Life.

#### LEADERSHIP AND TITLES

Self-assertion is a phase of that pride of life which is not of the Father, but is of the world. Real love of the Father casts out love of worldly ways. Love of honor or distinction or power proves lack of love for God. It is of the fleeting earth, devoid of immortality. Those of this love are not of the Blessed. Service marks the divinely great. The humility that stooped to wash his disciples' soiled feet was the Lord's example. Not to be served, but to serve was his concern and mission. His true followers are likewise disposed to serve one another as there is occasion. Any wish to rule is positively excluded. Yet, today, the big emphasis is on "leadership"

until it is like a fetish in religious activities. Religious education is largely directed to preparation for leadership. Lust for advantage, position and power is the big incentive toward all educational application. But Jesus said to modestly take the lowest place *until one's worth is recognized and promotion offered*. This contradicts most practice, wherein chief places are wanted at the start, and eagerly sought. What is the end sought in school work? Is it the resulting ability, the enlarged and cultured mind, the improvement of all faculties for their own good and the proper response to the Creator who gave them? Not much, but diplomas, degrees, titles *as means to social and business advantage*. World-lust; pride-of-life—these fill our schools. Dr., Rev., Ph.D. or just B.A. look nice hooked onto a name, and they get a job and a salary that four times the ability and ten times the experience can not get.

Degrees? Honors? Why not? They're all doing it now the world over. At this writing, the latest word is that the degree "Doctor of Atheism" will be tagged onto graduates from the new anti-religious university in Leningrad. "Doctor of Atheism" follows the analogy of "Doctor of Divinity." As the "D.D." is contrary to Christ, the "D.A." is more defensible, being more consistent. It is not in direct disobedience to the founder of Atheism, as is the other of a direct and emphasized command of Christ. Affectation, display and pride belong to the kingdom of darkness, being utterly contrary to the kingdom of light. If preachers would read some church history, and learn the conditions under which present religious titles were assumed, they would have less respect for them, even without regard to Christian duty—which is real pleasure to true hearts. Christ forbids such vanity and unnaturalness. Essential quality has recognition in heaven, not titles. To pray "Thy will



be done on earth as it is in heaven" while seeking and using titles of distinction is insulting mockery. This is one of many such inconsistencies that prevent proper expression of Christianity today.

Is this only an inference, or does the Lord give any specific direction? Both. Humility suggests it. Some folks say that we are free to do anything not actually forbidden in the Bible. For instance, no mention is made of tobacco, so it is not wrong to use it. But tobacco was not known where and when the Bible was written, so there was no occasion for mention. Christianity is not tied with tabulated laws, but is a life of the spirit led or impelled by the Spirit, so real Christians follow principles of conduct without need of halters or fences. The unction mentioned in 1 John 2:20 means spiritual discernment for guidance. We are not to yield to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life in any form. If all professing Christians were true to this, the world would wonder at the transformation. We are to present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and well-pleasing unto God, which is our rational divine service (Rom. 12:1). Bodies polluted with tobacco or other filthy poison are not pure. It is not rational to offer filth to God. And more, our Christian bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, so should be kept clean. As we are rational, we know this without specific orders in scripture. This applies to all details of behaviour. All self-indulgence of animal appetites and passions must be cut off.

Spiritual-mindedness (not emotional, but rational) sees a truth spontaneously, but God's word gives direct counsel to help the novice in special items. Before his disciples were spiritual-minded, Jesus told them plainly the wrong of presumptuous pride in using titles of distinction and superiority, stating the reason, as was his

custom. He treated his followers as friends, explaining to them the meaning of his teachings. Truth is not a mystery to real Christians; for they have the mind of the Master. Christianity is no secret society, nor is any secret society Christian. Truth may not be hidden in a lodge-room or under a tub. Any who fail to see the truth of Christ's teaching is blinded by the god of this world, the prince of darkness. And the longer the string of titles, the denser is likely to be the darkness towards the simplicity in Christ who is the wisdom of God, just as Paul says. Regarding the use of titles Jesus said:

Be not called Rabbi (a Jewish school title equivalent to our Doctor); for one is your leader (Greek, *kathegetes*), Christ; and you are all brethren. And call no man on earth your father (a term of special honor given to religious teachers as directors of the lives of their pupils, and as Romish priests are called); for one is your Father, the one in heaven. Do not be called leaders; for one is your leader, Christ. The greatest of you shall be your servant. But whoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; but whoever will humble himself shall be exalted. — *Matt. 23:8-12*.

Nothing can be plainer or more emphatic—with three expressions corresponding to three scholastic or ecclesiastical degrees. Such titular distinctions tend to pride that puffs up some and disparages others, contrary to real righteousness. James says that any making of distinctions of honor between persons is sin. God has no use for big titles, even for himself. To be affectionately called "Father" is his highest wish. Even in days when men were incapable of this great vision, God sought to teach them that personal quality, simple integrity of being, is the great thing. When Moses, puzzled with the commission to Pharaoh and Israel, asked what name to give to tell who sent him, he was not told to use some imposing or startling title (not so much as "Worshipful Master") but to say simply that "I AM" had sent him. Simple integrity of being, without blare or boast, is the



highest glory. It was then, and is now, the strangest thing in the world. What suits God should satisfy us. Real power is modest, not showy. Gravitation is silent and all gravity likewise. Diskoyalty to God in this item disgraces the pages of history, and now shames the profession of Christianity everywhere.

What? Should we reform our schools, seminaries and universities; our Bible Institutes and churches, as well as individual selves, in this item? Why not? "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). Whoever and whatever has not the meek and lowly spirit of Jesus is not Christian. The Master says: "Repent." No idle words come from him. God's word is yea and amen in Christ Jesus—forever settled in heaven. "Blessed are they who hear (or read) the word of God and keep it" (not explain it away). "If any man love me, he will keep my words." What Jesus said about humility and titles is to be kept as much as anything else he said. A proud and contrary attitude is shown wherever these words of the Lord are disregarded, and the fellowship of God is forfeited. Far better that Presence than a lineful or mouthful of degrees and honorary titles, and the jobs they bring.

The craze for leadership and for titles as indicating ability therefor contradicts Christ's word that the greatest shall be servant of all. "He that glories, let him glory in the Lord (not in titles or leadership). For not he that commends himself (or is commended by a title) is approved, but whom the Lord commends (by giving spiritual understanding and wisdom)." Self-exaltation is an expression of pride, which is of the Devil and is contemptible in God's sight; for he "*resists* the proud but gives grace to the lowly." Place-seeking and honor-seeking have no part in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus reproved the crowds that sought him for loaves and

fishes—for temporal advantage. He accepts only those who are interested in truth and all that is involved with it, regardless of worldly conditions. Wisdom is of God. Very little wisdom can be found in our modern school activities, which glory in monkey-science and dispense the vanities of worldly honors.

A Christian's badge of honor is such as adorns the doctrine of Christ, which even a slave can do, unlettered and unrecognized (Titus 2:20) by a proud world—the badge of an honest, upright simplicity in all integrity, a gentle voice, a kind word, a helpful act, an open purse where there is need. Throngs of D.Ds. and Ph.Ds. are buried in oblivion, but God himself wrote indelibly on the pages of history the little loving act of an obscure woman who anointed Jesus, doing what she could. And gentle Dorcas, who made some simple garments for poor neighbors, is also honored in the world-read apostolic record. The presumption of the "Holy Father" of Rome is only an exaggeration of what every man does who affects the title "Rev." or "D.D." Etc. None of these are Christian badges, marking either quality or ability in spiritual realities. To confer blessings, not to be praised, is the Christian worker's aim and pleasure.

As to emphasis on leadership, with urge to prepare for it, why not heed the caution in James 3:1—"Be not many masters (teachers, in the Greek text), knowing that we shall receive greater condemnation (or judgment)"? The alluring honor of leadership is tempered with the caution of responsibility. But too few think of this. Pulpits and Bible-school teachers' chairs, not to consider other educational agencies, are filled with many incompetents who, from sheer ignorance of fundamental principles and even Bible text, mislead multitudes by wrong teaching. Some talk loudest who are least qualified. Many prate of Fundamentalism while



contradicting very elementary teachings of Christ. We might detail some conspicuous cases, but another book may do that. Incidental items are appearing in this. When blind lead blind the crowd falls into a ditch, and there is just where much of Christendom is today—in a deep ditch.

Modern minds prate about the spiritual when they mean the psychical. They who trade frankly under the label "psychism" are the more honest. Mere psychical development may glory in worldly achievements that puff self and get ahead of others, but that is contrary to God, and separates from him. Self-depreciation, even, is better than self-praise. It regards intrinsic and ultimate spiritual conditions in the presence of Divine perfection and in the honest acknowledgment of self-failure. To measure ourselves among and by ourselves is not wise or even sensible. What if we do exceed a short measure? We fail the possibilities in God's plan for us. If we humble ourselves, God will lift us up in reality by imparting his own nature to us. He can do nothing with the proud; for pride is of the Devil. We must first repent, or change our attitude.

#### INFERIORITY COMPLEX

Not in the technical sense, but with a more general application of the expression, we may mention "Inferiority Complex" as the big bugbear now being held up to the dread of parents and teachers in dealing with children. To let a child escape the pride of devilish conceit is a terrible wrong, a blunder fatal to the development of the self-assertiveness necessary to a successful career! Urgent instructions are given as to how to cultivate in the modest and obedient an attitude of independence and self-will. But the holy boy Jesus, in whom dwelt the fullness of God, did not hold or practice any such

notion. At the age of twelve he had an unusual opportunity to assert himself, but did not do so. He gave a suggestion to direct attention to the real situation, but it was not understood. He did not insist on having his own way, however important were the interests. He chose to fulfill all righteousness in simple obedience to the conventional relations in which placed. To be subject to his temporary earthly guardians for thirty years was no disgrace in the eyes of the Son of God, nor did it disqualify him for doing the biggest job the Son of man ever had—bigger than creating worlds and their equipments; the redemption and restoration of a fallen race. When we live with reference to God in the big interests of eternal verities, we are satisfied with the blessedness of humility that seeks to walk in the spirit rather than follow fleeting ambition for earthly vanities.

Not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, we can admit that others are to be considered in our conduct, so it is not our business to get ahead of them in any contest or in the ordinary processes of life. Some surprise awaits those who will attend to what God says about the prevailing zeal for every conceivable scheme of contest and conquest, getting advantage over fellow-beings in any way to assert and profit by some superiority. Read thoughtfully Phil. 2:3-9, as follows:

Doing nothing in strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind esteeming others better than yourselves; not each having an eye for his own interests only but everyone also for those of others. Have in you this mind which is also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form (condition) of God, did not consider the being equal to God a thing to be grasped after, but renounced himself taking the form of a servant, having been made in the likeness of men. And being found in the order of man he humbled himself (even in that so lowly station), becoming obedient (submissive even to men) unto death, even the death of a cross. Therefore God supremely exalted him and gave him a name that is above every name.



This accords with the law of the Kingdom of Heaven that self-humiliation results in final glorification. It is a principle of immortality. Only by a large measure of the Holy Spirit is it possible to humble oneself to the point of not insisting on holding one's right, just as Christ did in this quotation. He had a right to retain his divine dignity, being under no obligation to assume a humble human form. But he did not seize his dignity in selfish fear of losing it (as humans do, like children grasp and hug their toys, which is the meaning of the peculiar Greek expression rendered "robbery" in the common version of this passage). Rather, he voluntarily sacrificed himself in the interest of undeserving human sinners—rebels. Little, wicked, unworthy man feels disgraced at any prospect of losing a "right", and fights for it. Only God-men (which real Christians are) can deny self and let others benefit from their humiliation. The self-expression fad in contempt for humility and disgust at "inferiority" is an animal impulse—the crowding of hogs over swill. It fits the monkey-doctrine of life, but refutes any claim to be Christian.

Humility? Self-negation? Absolutely essential and fundamental principle (a law of Christ as incarnate God) in the Kingdom of Heaven, how much is it practiced, acknowledged or even tolerated in up-to-date Christendom? Where is it really taught in home, school, Bible school, church? Are not children taught from infancy to be proud and to show-off as a matter of course? In this are they spoiled for time and eternity, with the rare exceptions where response is made to the appeal of true teaching. Real wisdom is hidden from smart experts, but made clear to modest minds (Matt. 11 : 25,26). If we are modest enough to let God guide us, he gives us his own wisdom so that we live even in this world as citizens of Heaven. "As he is, so are we in this world." We

are to express in our present environments the attitude of God's mind—his will on earth as it is in heaven. We *are* what our supreme regard reaches out towards, and we attain according to application and conditions met with until we become complete according to the measure of Christ's fullness. Whether self or God be our aspiration, our own choice determines.

An inferiority complex is not so bad as an egotistical complex that practices self-expression. The first chapter of First Corinthians confirms this emphatically. It should be studied by those who boost self-expression. Boasting and flattering cults are characteristic of demon guidance. The several spiritistic cults of the day, operating under different names, are much given to flattering their devotees, assuring of the great things they are to become and do under the guidance of spirits—invisible helpers. Modern culture is very ancient in its stress of pride and selfishness, with all kinds of vanity, display and pretense. In Acts we read of one, Theudas, who boasted that he was "somebody," and of Simon, the sorcerer, who bewitched the people, advertising himself to be "some great one." Proud boasters and pretenders usually get the crowds; for the public is still fond of being humbugged—bewitched. "Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life" still appeal to most people—and get their response, with their money. In 1 John 2:16, the Greek word for "pride" (or pomp) is *alazoneia*, which is from *alazon*, meaning one who roams like a vagabond (independent), insolent, boastful, self-assertive, pompous, proud—a circus press-agent! Just so, the pride-of-life is always a mere show, a bubble of vanity. And such is the bulk and burden of modern educational effort, magnifying self-expression as the big aim of life. It would seem that the last word of vanity has been spoken in the news item that a Berlin gymna-



zium has installed large mirrors before an apparatus for certain children's exercises, and another item about the use of mirrored doilies at dining tables! Moderns are so fearfully afraid of losing self-consciousness, and catching an inferiority complex!! How in contrast is the mind of God's Son who humbled himself, and says that the poor in spirit are blessed.

Some great names in history tell of the superiority of an inferiority complex. Moses, for example, was a very meek man. He *chose* affliction with the people of God rather than retain the position of President of the University of Egypt and other high honors with all the pleasures available. When God asked him to do some special work he replied: "Who am I?" He did not show a bundle of diplomas, nor did God ask to see any. He disclaimed ability as a speaker. He did not jump at the chance to be a champion. He made no show of college athletic records. Moses was a conspicuous case of an inferiority complex. King David had the modesty of an obscure shepherd boy. In one of his famous Psalms he sang: "I would rather be a (mere) doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell (with distinction) in the tents (shepherd language) of wickedness." Paul, the most conspicuous and most efficient apostle, claimed to be the least of all saints, unworthy to be called an apostle. He did his official work with fear and trembling. He even declared it to be the way of God to choose the weak to accomplish great ends.

God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised has God chosen, yes, and things which are not to bring to nothing things that are—that no flesh should glory in his presence.—1 Cor. 1:27-29.

The Son of God made himself of no reputation. He described himself as meek and lowly in heart. He declared

that the egotistical and self-assertive can not even enter the Kingdom of Heaven. They must first humble themselves and become as *little* children. But the practice of today is to derounce humility and exalt egotism. Show and brag are everywhere encouraged. The very first law of the Kingdom of Heaven (humility) is repudiated and despised by many who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Robert Quillen has said :

Humility is a decent thing. It is not the servile cringing of the spineless, but a wise man's realization of his little importance in a vast universe. It is the peculiar virtue of the great-hearted.

Blessed are the poor in spirit—not the egotistical, the conceited, the proud, the boastful, the self-seeking. Not self first and others afterwards, if at all ; not " me and John " ; not " I, me, my ", but " let each esteem others better than himself ". So are we taught in the " Good Book ". Even more strongly is it put : " In honor, preferring one another. " That is, when a mayor is to be elected don't try to beat your neighbor to the honor but modestly help to elect him. [!!!] When a deacon is to be appointed in the church, don't seek the honor but sincerely nominate Brother Jones. But that upsets all politics—cuts out electioneering for self ; cuts out any strife for leadership ; cuts out ambition to be boss, or to win a contest with anybody ; cuts out ambition everywhere. What ! Nothing left in life worth while ? Yes, indeed. Being like God is worth while. He has plenty to do as he is, and we shall find so much more in life when we have his Spirit that we shall not miss things we now so much prize. Living in the heavenly citizenship is not a freak asceticism, but a beautiful, simple, rational and normal use of this world without abusing it. Selfishness is abnormal, and its expression is a real abuse of what God made. Christ reconciled all things unto God. So when we enter the Christ-life we begin



the normal life, restored to the divine likeness. True Christian other-worldness is not a mystical abstraction but right adjustment between the spiritual and the material. In his intercessory prayer for the apostles, Jesus said: "I do not pray you to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

The old pagan notion of inherent evil in matter was denied in the very fact of the incarnation and in the social life of Christ. Things are not wrong *per se*, but may be misused unto mischief. Any wrong is in the motive, end or manner of use. We are to be masters of, not slaves to, the material. Drunkenness is wrong because of excess (lack of self-control), not because of any essential sin in drinking wine. The early church repudiated prohibition as being heresy, just as the New Testament teaches. Prohibition is a Mohammedan virtue. But the religion of the false prophet has no power from the Holy Spirit to enable moderation in conduct. To borrow false tactics is to deny true power. Only a blind zeal in a perverted righteousness fails to see the sure failure of such a course. A form (semblance) of piety is conspicuous now, but the power of real piety is repudiated. Again the call is to repent.

Being mayor of a city is not wrong if one serves the community thereby. A Christian man may accept the office when offered him. But he may not seek it for honor or power, or to assert himself against another. Some early Christians were officials of the yet pagan Roman government, having been appointed thereunto. Ambitious scheming and seeking for office are excluded.

The very word "ambition" contains its own wrong suggestion. Some mistake it to mean aspiration in the proper sense, but it does not. Its origin and proper use spoil it for any spiritual application. It comes from a

Latin word meaning to "go about", with special political reference to going about among people soliciting favor and votes. The wrong of such conduct was recognized by pagan republican Rome, which imposed severe punishment for electioneering. Such self-seeking is rude and immodest, even when not dishonest. It has not the blessedness of the poor in spirit.

Poverty of spirit is regarded with contempt instead of approval right here in America where, theoretically (a polite word for pretentiously or hypocritically), the poor have equality with the rich. Brag and display flaunt their impudent folly everywhere from childhood to the grave. "I AM IT" is the conspicuous label. The biggest and best are at every street corner and crossroad and all the way between. And modern high-brows say it is a gesture of the inner divinity struggling for self-expression. Glory and praise be unto myself forever!! But when two young ambitious disciples came to the Lord with a prayer of pride, asking for chief places in the new government, Jesus reproved them (he actually criticised them!), saying to the whole class:

You know that those affecting to rule the nations lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you. On the contrary, if anyone may wish to become great among you he shall be your helper. And if any of you may wish to be chief, he shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be waited on but to wait upon, and to give his life a ransom for many.

There is no place for popery or any system of prelacy in true Christianity—no place for any office-seeking or honor-seeking anywhere.

Some other scriptural passages are so practical and pertinent, it is fitting to repeat them here. What God regards important enough to emphasize by repetition appeals to our interest and demands our attention. If we have at all the mind of Christ, our hearts enjoy no thrill



so much as having his words (words of life) opened to us. The Holy Spirit delights to show those words to any who are alert towards them, and breathes his most rapturous presence as we are open *to receive faithfully*. "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

To voluntarily pick out the most inconspicuous seat at a party or a banquet is such a freak as to be regarded a sign of an inferiority complex. But Jesus said to do that very thing in real modesty. Let somebody else judge as to worth and do the promoting as deserved. "He who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." The same words were applied in contrasting the bragging Pharisee and the shamefaced publican. James wrote: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up." Peter wrote: "You younger submit yourselves unto the older. All of you submit to each other, and be clothed with humility; because God is opposed to the haughty, but gives favor to the lowly." How does this fit the present drive for self-expression in schools, so successful that pupils run colleges and universities, to some extent, by strikes and destructive violence? Lawlessness must result from self-exaltation. Paul, who had not heard or read the Beatitudes, but received his understanding of spiritual things by revelation, taught that humility is the first Christian quality. Writing to Ephesians, he said: "I exhort you, therefore (because of the spiritual developments referred to), to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and meekness." Pride, self-assertion and self-expression dishonor the name "Christian". The apostle had just stated that believers have the Christ-character formed within. Humility is the conspicuous feature of Christ's character. The Greek word for humility is said

to be rare in Greek literature, where it has an unfavorable meaning. Greeks despised the gospel because of the lowliness of Jesus Christ—it was to them foolishness. Romans also held humility in contempt. The present sneer at the inferiority complex reverts to the old pagan pride. Christianity is unique in the approval of humility. Humility never evolved from idolatry.

### CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY

We are told to be clothed with humility. While we are not to judge from appearances in the sense of mere circumstantial evidence (which John 7:24 means), yet we do have some clue to character in the outward appearance. Modest people dress modestly. Immodest dress proves an immodest background for the picture. Only stubborn perversity denies the fact in current costuming. Sowing to the flesh in this is already reaping promised corruption, as all but the stupid see. Our boasting civilization is in some things almost a parody on the old hideous paganism described in the epistle to the Romans and more freely in heathen literature, only glossed over by profession of a twisted Christianity that ignores and repudiates the most vital truths in their most obvious application. Fuller seriousness of this will appear later.

The apostle Paul uses the psychological relations of character and dress to illustrate and emphasize need of care in conduct. While appearances may be deceitful so we are not to judge the heart by the dress, yet there is a general correspondence between garb and grace. It was because of this that gowns and vestments were so conspicuous in ancient religious ceremonies. Before the Holy Spirit was given (made possible by Christ's work of atonement and redemption) psychological appeals to impress were proper. But after the Spirit came, giving ability to see truth directly, there was no more use for



kindergarten processes, as the apostle Paul so urgently insisted, calling them "world-rudiments". He said that retention of the old style of religion is denial of Christ and repudiation of his salvation. There being no other salvation, they are lost who follow the old ways of ceremony and ritual. So Paul taught to accept and practice the new way of piety and conduct, saying: "As many of you as have been baptized into [Greek referential *eis* especially important and suggestive here] Christ have put on Christ." Believers have the character and conduct of God's children (like Christ) instead of a carnal nature supplemented by religious toggery and dramatic ceremonies that never saved anyone, but were tolerated by the Lord temporarily because of conditions. Some will object to this unusual language, but it is mild beside Paul's on the subject. Apparently, little attention is given Paul's teachings, although he was special ambassador to the Gentiles (of whom we are), and slight of him is disrespect to Christ and to God the Father. To hold to things discarded by God as no longer suitable, is to reflect on his judgment, yet Christendom is full of the Ebionism. Superstition results. In various places Paul emphasizes the need of putting on the Lord Jesus, or the new man created in him, as the way of life. Excluding deliberate hypocrisy and also poverty, people act about as they dress. Sometimes clothing is in uniform to indicate business or occupation. So to put on Christ is to profess to be and live like him—a beautiful illustration, assuming integrity, of course; for Paul did not write to accommodate hypocrites.

As Jesus Christ was the incarnation of God (God in or clothed with flesh) so that he was the exact image of the Father until he could say that those who saw him saw the Father, so, in a degree, do we show God when we put on Christ. Great responsibility rests on every

Christian to live like Christ, and not dishonor God by misrepresenting him. "You are my witnesses" means not only verbal testimony but also the exhibit of character resulting from fellowship with Christ. We are to walk as he walked. He lived as he taught. So must we live as he taught, including the Beatitudes with the emphasis on humility as first virtue. Nothing more misrepresents God in Christ than pride, haughtiness, showiness, rivalry, self-will, self-expression, assumption of superiority—everything indicating conceit.

If, instead of the good garments of salvation, we put on the shoddy stuff of worldly pretensions, we can have the applause of the world for our pretty things, but we can not be numbered among the Blessed or Immortals. Cutting worldly capers does not go with the garments of Christian profession. None know this better than honest worldly people. Only deluded simpletons and deliberate hypocrites try to wear carnival costumes in alleged Christian service. When we put on Christ we are not to make provision for the flesh, to supply its desires. Yet the most activity and expense today, both in schools and churches wearing a Christian profession, are directed in exactly this forbidden way. "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of religion, but denying its power (efficiency)" describes our day correctly. Schools emphasize play above mental culture. Churches and their many adjuncts cater principally to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, all of which are contrary to God and to the Christian profession. "Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, lest he be found naked." We are not, then, over-particular in calling attention to the need of keeping a faithful and clean Christian testimony; for it goes with us to the Judgment. We are to see several other things than humility as we proceed with



this review. They call for careful reading and hearty response. There is plenty of place for repentance.

A comment on Eph. 2:4, in Expositor's Greek Testament on humility, is too good not to pass on to more general readers. It says:

It is a grace of the Spirit, the disposition of loving submissiveness in the first place to God and his dealings with us, and, as the consequence of that, of quiet restraint, mildness and patient abnegation of self in the provocations of others. It is a moral quality, therefore, with a far wider scope, a larger significance, a deeper and more vital relation to character than was thought of by the philosophers and moralists of the old world, who regarded it only as the opposite of *savageness, harshness, roughness*.

True humility is not a mere softening of manners, but is disposition of character—a phase of immortality, a blessedness in partaking of God's essential nature.

In the parable of the marriage supper to which many of all sorts had been invited (Matt. 22:2-14), yet where some were impudent and presumptuous enough to present themselves (one case being cited as an example) without having on the required robe provided at the entrance, we have a most emphatic showing of the use we have for the virtues taught in the sermon on the mount, however much pious postponers may repudiate them. Righteousness must be in the heart, but must also have outward expression. As faith without works is dead, so piety without virtue is a humbug. This parable teaches that many profess to accept salvation and even join a church, yet have not the character that God recognizes and accepts—the character imparted freely in the new birth and which manifests itself in godlike behaviour. Unless clothed with humility and other real Christian qualities no one may sit down in heaven.

Incidentally it is well worth noting how this kingdom parable contradicts the entirely unscriptural doctrine of the postponement of the kingdom program while the

church is substituted. The Jews refused the gospel offer and even killed the messengers. So they were destroyed and Jerusalem was burned, which ended Judaism forever. Then the gospel of the kingdom was carried to all parts of the world. Many profess acceptance, but few are genuine. Individual Jews are converted, but, as Paul explained, they are grafted in just as Gentiles are and become assimilated in the one fold (changing the figure) under one Shepherd. The notion that the Jews are to become an independent and dominant nation in the administration of the kingdom to be established at a future advent of Christ has no basis in Scripture, but contradicts this parable and all relative teaching. The hobbies of ignorant zealots are too often accepted when wisdom suggests investigation. Some real reading of the Bible would correct many queer notions.

#### PARTY-SPIRIT AND SECTS

Love is not alone in blindness, though gentlest in any mistaken action. Zeal sometimes becomes violent in a mistaken earnestness. It even says: "My cause; right or wrong, my cause." Party-spirit is narrow, stupid, unreasonable, inconsiderate, uncharitable, unkind, and several other bad things. Its zeal is not according to knowledge, but is directed by supposed self-interest that refuses to investigate. It is the opposite of the childlike frankness and simple obedience that not only listens to, but looks for, instruction. It is contrary to Christ's urge to ask, seek, knock—study and investigate. It is puffed up with self-sufficiency, which insults the Holy Spirit and shuts out his enlightenment. Party-spirit is wrong generally, and is positively destructive in the church. Many defend sectarianism as an accommodation to differing mental trends. But that is only a defense of self-assertion in stubborn refusal to do the investigating



enjoined by the Master, and accept the findings which come from the rational Spirit of Truth. This needs to be emphasized as against the too common superstition of following impressional promptings. Devout, but uninformed, people make this blunder, thinking they are so guided by the Holy Spirit. But truth is light to the understanding. Its appeal is to the spiritual recognition and comprehension, not to the blind, though feeling, carnal or psychic nature. Impulse directs animals, but we are not <sup>to</sup> be like horses and mules, guided by pull on bit and bridle (impressional guidance), as Scripture says plainly. Much mischief has been, and is being, done by just this thing, both in individual lives and in social movements. Group psychology is not for Christian use at all, though commonly employed in so-called evangelism or revivalism. Delusion and disaster always result from such unspiritual processes. Sects have been multiplied in response to impressional promptings. In my library are 150 books on the Apocalypse. Some claim superior merit as accurate expositions because their authors prayed for special guidance by the Holy Spirit and arose from their knees full of impressions of what to write. But they wrote varying and even contradictory things. And such books are among the poorest put out on the subject. Diverse doctrines are not derived from the one Spirit of Truth. They come from biased imaginations and deceiving devils.

A little real and honest study in humble willingness to give up prejudices and to accept the truth as it is in Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life, would dispose of every sect in Christendom, restoring original unity and the power unto righteousness that division prevents. Paul reproved a sectarian outbreak in the church at Corinth, making urgent appeal to reason in loyalty to Christ, who is not divided. He alone died for

us. He bought us, so has full right to our undivided loyalty. Party-spirit is of the flesh, and the flesh is not to guide; for it is dead—crucified with Christ, if we are baptized into (Greek referential *eis*) him. We are to live in the spirit enlightened by the Spirit. But there is only one Spirit by whom believers are baptized into one body to be in unity. Being humble, meek and patient, we do not quarrel but forbear in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God (not of systematic theology or sectarian whims), unto complete Christian manhood. Having the mind of Christ, we are to think the same things. His mind is not in uncertainty or confusion. When we follow him instead of notions we have no divisions. Pride of opinion builds walls that exalt self while destroying the church and those in it. In dealing with the Corinthians in this matter, Paul warned that sect promoters are church destroyers who will be destroyed. If preachers merely do poor work with the truth, they will suffer loss but will barely be saved themselves. But heretical and sectarian teachers destroy ("defile" is incorrect) the temple (or church) of God, and such will God destroy. So to pervert the gospel into sectarian dogmas is a very serious thing. It is better to swallow conceit of opinion, and become what seems foolish in Christian orthodoxy than to destroy the church with new sectarian notions. A careful reading of the third chapter of First Corinthians is a good corrective of certain tendencies. Some who now use the name of Christ in a party spirit should heed the warning, as well as other sects. What a revolution in Christendom would follow honest repentance (change of mind) in this matter!

Some talk of honest pride, but pride is never honest nor can it be. It insists on self—regardless. When Satan



invented pride he lost all integrity; for pride is a violation of original and essential adjustments. Sect pride is too dishonest to obey either Christ or his apostle in the matter. Mere notions from ignorance, fanciful interpretations or inattentive reading are held in stubborn pride against all rational, scriptural and historical evidence. Jesus cautioned against this in saying to take heed how one hears (reads), and in urging to thorough investigation—ask, seek, knock. Paul urged a humility that allows the other fellow some rights, in the peace of love which overlooks even many faults before accusing or separating. He said, for instance, that a brother in the church should be allowed to observe certain days as sacred without censure, because of not yet understanding spiritual truth. But the church as a whole must hold to the fact that, in Christ, we live in the eternal relations that know no days, seasons, buildings or places. To return to such old Jewish customs is to repudiate Christ and to fall from grace—the very thing that now most effectually prevents the witness of churches to real Christianity. Modern Ebionism is fatal to spiritual life and testimony. The call is to repentance. This applies to most things that make sects. Let individuals have their notions until they learn better by kind instruction instead of driving them out by edict or contention, so discouraging faith or encouraging pride of opinion that sets up a sect. Of course, positive heresy should have more vigorous treatment.

The publishing house of a conspicuous sect requested a prominent minister of the denomination (who was a professor in one of their theological seminaries) to write a book on the hobby that makes the sect. From the noise their preachers have made on the subject it was supposed to be a big thing, and a book of four-hundred pages was specified. The preacher-scholar had taken

the denomination's dictum for granted without investigation, as they all do. But the new responsibility led Prof. Fairfield to obey the Lord by investigating. Of course, with his prejudices, he only thought to obtain a mass of confirmatory evidence with which to fill such a big book. Any impression of possible failure in this would have been scorned as from the Devil. Great was his surprise to find that there is no basis whatever for the denominational specialty, and that the persistent contention is positively contrary to Scripture and also to the history of early church practice. Being honest, he left that sect and wrote an excellent book in defense of the truth. And so would every member of that sect be surprised and convinced, if he would make real honest inquiry; for "he who seeks finds." But all are made to think it sin to question their leaders, and these are blind. But when false teachers began to mislead the churches the apostle said to make careful comparison with Scripture, and then hold fast its teachings. Sects can not stand where all are humble in fidelity to God's word instead of proud in holding man's opinions. We must give up the sectarian mind to be among the blessed humble of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Some say that denominations are normal expressions of social conditions, to be not only tolerated but even welcomed. Class, national and race differences are of this world only, and have no relation to the Kingdom of Heaven. The church is a kingdom institution. It knows nothing of social lines, fences or walls. Surveyors are not commissioned to distribute churches among social tribes. There is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism—one Spirit and one Father who made of one blood one humanity. Perverted social differences are abnormal. Christ is restoring the normal. Sectarian strifes and walls hinder that restoration. Sects are of



the carnal mind, as Paul explained to the Corinthians who were starting several all at once. Some were not of spiritual mind so as to perceive truth however presented. Being carnally-minded, they emphasized the points and illustrations used by speakers as their stupid fancies suggested. When Apollos, in a spurt of poetic eloquence, referred [we say only for example] to the eucharistic table as an altar of sacrifice, some hearers took it literally and proposed to start a movement for an Apolloite church. Others, likewise, took up phrases from Paul and Peter, and tried to stir up a special following for each, as was the custom with new Greek philosophers, and as some modern cults start. When Paul learned of the threatened break in that church he sent an urgent protest. Party-spirit had become such a fad that one faction even used the name of Christ as a sectarian name, as is done now by one of our most bigoted sects claiming to be unsectarian. If sects were useful, here was the opportunity for Paul to approve. But he said they should speak the same thing and be "perfectly united in the same mind and in the same judgment (opinion). . . He that glories, let him glory in the Lord (not in his own notions)." Unless such accord is possible, the apostle would not enjoin it.

Sects are fatal to real faith in Christ, making him not the chief interest but party opinions supreme. When we see several church buildings within hand-shaking distance of one another, we know that there is no real Christian love there. They are what Jesus calls humbug churches. Certainly he did, when he said that substituting human opinions for divine teachings makes any worship in vain—empty. In condemning sects, Paul said: "You are God's farm, or God's building"—not mine or Apollos'. (1 Cor. 3:3-9). Sects prove the carnal mind to be now in control of Christendom; for where

the Spirit is there is unity and peace, not mere tolerance and compromise—federation. The Corinthian sectarian gesture involved the same elements that operate now ; so the same admonition applies now. Pride of opinion must be repented of and crucified however it may hurt.

#### UNITY REQUIRED

Some have the notion that apostolic directions are only friendly "counsels of perfection" that show the ideals of enthusiastic novices, but not intended for practical use. But they forget that God is no dreamer or dramatist or novelist, but his words are "yea and amen in Christ Jesus," which means that there is no trifling in any Christian teaching. Christ meant business in every detail, and only fools try to play with Christianity. As apostles were ambassadors of Christ, their words have all authority. Apologies for sects dispute and dismiss the Holy Spirit, who is now grieved away from sects, which explains the frantic resort to psychic measures and amusement novelties to keep churches on the list for census-takers. Born-again people are not slaves to natural tendencies, but think and act in spiritual ways that exclude sectarian impulses. So apology for sects as accommodating natural temperament or social bias falls to the earth whence it came. Under prevailing psychic conditions, it is not strange that Spiritism finds access into even "orthodox" churches whose pulpits preach doctrines of demons. Common mediums strut under the labels "Pastor", "Rev." and "Dr." They call their seance dens "churches", and advertise meetings in newspapers grouped with "regular" church notices. In blind stupidity many of the regulars fail to withdraw their notices from such infernal fellowship, thereby acknowledging to the world that they recognize Spiritism as a neighborly religious sect. Where publishers will



not discriminate, with-holding notices will not hurt any society at all loyal to truth. Much more might properly be said here, but we proceed to quote apostolic orders regarding the propriety, necessity and duty of unity.

Live together (as in a community) as becomes the gospel of Christ; . . . that you stand firm in one spirit, with one soul (motive, incentive, as of a loyal army) co-working for the faith of the gospel.

This is a proper rendering of Phil. 1:27, emphasizing the fact that sectarianism is unbecoming Christian profession. There is but one gospel. Its language is not ambiguous like that of heathen oracles. Soldiers of the faith who split up into factions are disloyal and useless. Sects have no power to promote real Christianity, but are a hindrance, as the present situation proves. Far better that they be disbanded and stop the sham display of a zeal without understanding.

Be of the same mind.—Rom. 12:16.

With one mind and one mouth glorify God.—Rom. 15:6.

Be of one mind.—2 Cor. 13:11.

Of one accord; of one mind.—Phil. 2:2.

That they be of the same mind in the Lord.—Phil. 4:2.

Be all of one mind.—1 Peter 3:8.

These, added to similar quotations above, are not idle repetitions. They show how faithfully the apostles tried to preserve the unity of the faith in all places among all believers. Failure followed pride in human notions demanding attention and acceptance. A striking and significant suggestion is afforded in Acts 4:24-32. If the churches now would act in the same accord, some wonderful results would follow.

### STRIFE AND VAINGLORY

Party-spirit works mischief other than sect-making, so the apostle says that *nothing* is to be done in strife or vainglory (Phil. 2:3). The Greek word here rendered

"strife" was originally a political term meaning party-spirit. Its application is much wider than to sectarian troubles. Nothing is to be done from such attitude, as being entirely foreign to the mind of Christ. Rivalry contradicts unity. When Jesus prayed that his apostles might be one as he and the Father are one, he forever excluded from Christian society all antagonism, competition and emulation. Love as brethren can not fight as enemies. To imitate fighting, even in play, is wrong. Who would imitate a crime? Stage-players? Of that later. Who would imitate insult to God? Yet many do insult him by doing contrary to his will and word in regard to rivalry, which has its source in pride.

Rivalry says: "I think that I am better than you, and will show it to the world in a tussle." So a contest is held, with all show and shout, followed by trumpeting and prizes for one, but shame for the other. Anything like that in heaven? Not in God's presence. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is *said* by millions of professed Christians. Who can give names and addresses of a hundred in America who mean it where social customs violate most elemental righteousness? I know a man who tried for years to find a real Christian school to which to give valuable property, but not one has been found that does not boast in its emphatic programs of violation of just what we are considering. A conspicuous new university, parading its Fundamentalism and special loyalty to the Bible, when approached in the matter replied that such things are to be treated the same as food and drink—being moderate in pride, strife, vainglory and pretense!! If such contempt for the first law (principle) of the Kingdom of Heaven is the most conspicuous and decisive thing in super-loyal [!] Christian schools, what of the multitude of public and private ones making no profession? Unto what is the



young generation being educated? Churches might as well shut up. But most of them are busy doing the same evil in Sunday schools and young peoples' societies.

"Let nothing be done in party-spirit or vainglory" excludes all rivalry for distinction in small affairs as well as in large. Size determines nothing as to right and wrong. Principles, heart attitudes, prove character and determine destiny. A counterfeit dollar is as wrong as a counterfeit ten-dollar bill. Pride in spelling down a classmate is as wrong as pride in winning a big war. The wrong is in the attitude of mind, regardless of the detail of its expression. Modesty that picks out the least conspicuous seat does not impel to seek prominence in a ball game. Contests have their object in the honor of one at the expense of another's dishonor. Such is contrary to God. It is the pet of the Devil. As god of this world-order (not the earth) he is busy running things in the interest of pride and vanity—mere empty folly disguised as culture. Most people are blind to it. Mere argument may be so abused as to become serious strife. Even school debates sometimes engender bitterness and resentment unto quarreling or fighting. A writer says:

Millions of murders have been committed and endless hatred, bitterness and enmity have resulted from heated arguments that had their beginning in a friendly discussion of a trivial subject. An argument is a form of mental combat, and there are few people who can indulge in a friendly argument without becoming unduly excited, and this excitement is one of the greatest of nerve strains. I have met with hundreds of cases of nerve disorders which were mainly due to this form of nerve abuse.

—*Von Boeckmann* in "NERVE FORCE."

In all questions worth considering, the safe and right way is to simply accept the teaching of Scripture. Simple faith rests body, mind and soul. "Strive not at all." Hardly any social, educational or religious activity now escapes appeal to pride of position or achievement—as

per prizes for best attendance, for bringing in most new recruits, or for largest offerings! If nothing bigger is provided, the contest is as to who has the silliest dress (costume sounds bigger but may be even more scant), or who wins the bridge game! We college grads are too cutely smart to have dignity or decorum; for we have learned that life is only a monkey-game, don't you know? Children's games usually have the form of contest as to which "side" wins. The devil-mind, abominable to God and all heaven, is cultivated from cradle to grave, as a matter of course. Do people never read their Bibles? Do pastors never guide their flocks? Where are the multitudes reported converted at "evangelistic" and revival meetings? The call to repent (change of attitude) applies to all people before they can receive the commendation "Blessed" in its first application—to the poor in spirit, the modest and retiring.

Multiplied rivalries and demonstrations of pride in religious institutions suggest the query whether they have baptized what God banishes from his Kingdom, expecting to rush it through. They do devilish things in the name of Christ unmindful of his warning "I never knew you workers of wickedness. Depart from me." Such simple things as Honor Rolls violate the principle of humility. What is done to be seen of men, for their praise, has no approval from God. Doing things from heart-interest in the right is the way of The Immortals. Blessed the poor in spirit, not blessed they who win a contest, get high marks, have their names on an honor roll for any purpose. Such tricks for holding interest are very wrong and harmful—positively not Christian. It is the carnal appeal, and the carnal is hostile to God without possibility of correction. It must be crucified. Better do nothing than do wrong. The Holy Spirit will take care of activities underaken in truth. To act in



violation of eternal righteousness is to forfeit the help of the Holy Spirit, who is grieved by emulation, pride and vainglory, and to develop an institution of bogus Christianity—a synagogue of Satan.

Business competition also needs consideration. Too many professing Christians think that business is out of range of their church piety. They may pray in church and cheat in store or swindle in office. Every Christian should be diligent in business, but he should and can be at the same time fervent in spirit. He should serve the Lord in his business. True success in business is not incompatible with the practice of the Golden Rule. "Live and let live" applies in business and professional occupations. The remarkable demonstration of community fellowship recorded in Acts 2:44-46 was a signal of the proper relations in all Christendom. For some time the early church continued to practice such communism—not the modern perversion. Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is present today people have the attitude of mutual interest, but are restrained in its expression by the conventions of society. Still, as James wrote, no real Christian will merely talk generosity—"Be you warmed and filled"—but will contribute to necessities as able. We prate of progress and wonderful attainments, but know nothing of the bigness of character that prompts one to work expressly to earn money to help others, as was specifically directed by the apostle Paul. Writing to raw recruits from heathenism, he said to do this very thing (Eph. 4:28). No Christian business man will try, or wish, to outdo his neighbor business man. He will not try to hog the patronage, nor do anything to injure his standing or hinder his prosperity. Good-will will be his attitude, not envy or rivalry. He will not brag up his own shop and run down his neighbor's. Indeed, all boasting is out of the Christian vocabulary in every re-

lation of life. As champion braggart, America shows the world a hypocritical claim to be Christian. The best, biggest, brightest, busiest, greatest, healthiest, jolliest, mightiest, noblest, proudest, quaintest, richest, sublimest, truest, wonderfulest, and any other ests in Webster is America and all in it. The spectacular is popular in everything. Sham, shoddy, show everywhere. Some have said that the United States is the kingdom which Jesus Christ started, but its conspicuous violation of the first word of description Jesus gave proves otherwise.

Development toward self-exaltation is working overtime in schools by the emphasis on contest-plays above literary interests. In real studies the mind is diverted from self and directed toward other objects with broadening effect. Christians, philanthropists and big benefactors do not develop from selfish plays and showy programs. One of the frenzies of folly lately evolved in monkey public schools is the "Who's Who?" contest. A sample event recently reported this program (omitting names here, though they were the "soul" of the thing, of course):

Most intelligent girl; most intelligent boy; most beautiful girl; most handsome boy; best athlete; best all-around girl; best all-around boy; friendliest girl; friendliest boy; most accomplished girl; most accomplished boy; most typical freshman; most sophisticated sophomore; jolliest junior; most dignified senior; cutest girl; cutest boy.

Reporter failed to say which was the grinningest devil that looked in at the show. Popularity contests help to develop capable citizens for a democracy! But they hinder response to God's offer of citizenship in heaven.

It takes a lot of education and a lot of taxes to carry on such silliness. Not strange that only teachers holding degrees can get jobs now! A Ph.D. in the Science of Silliness is the favorite. Parents ought to demand sensible teachers or none. Better ignorant than wise



in foolish pride. "Comparing themselves among themselves, they are not wise" says Scripture. Schools are now largely devils' playgrounds, disqualifying pupils for serious and spiritual thinking. Fun in vain and frivolous pride is the big thing with the new generation. End be? Idolatry. Worship of pleasure, frivolity and vainglory just as Paul says covetousness is idolatry. The object of our supreme affection or interest is our deity. "*Let nothing be done through party-spirit (competition) or vain-glory (egotism).*" A command of God as truly as "Thou shalt not kill." Teaching children to violate this very important principle, the fundamental one of the Kingdom of Heaven, is a very bad business. Jesus said that causing children to offend or stumble is so bad that any doing it would better be drowned in the deep sea. Such is God's opinion of teachers, parents and school officials who encourage rivalry, pride and show among children—causing them to offend. Not only are such things done as extras, but also as regular and prescribed programs, particularly athletics and dramatics, until a large part of school interest and energy is so directed.

#### GAMES AND ATHLETICS

Ancient pagans were much given to the rivalry and display of games in many forms. Living in the flesh and for the flesh, they had no sense of the truly noble things of the spiritual order. Repudiating the plainest teachings of Jesus Christ about the Kingdom of Heaven, our modern society continues to follow the old heathenish ways. It was a passion with high society of ancient Rome to not only attend, but to take part in, the theatre, circus, races and gladiatorial sports. Excitement was the special stimulus. Without spiritual culture and the intellectual activity it awakens, the people grasped for carnal pleasure—thrills that stirred emotions and

imagination—psychical at best, not spiritual. Pageants, parades, shows, dramatics, boxing, races, (ball not yet invented)—whatever gratified the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—were the conspicuous activities. Ulhorn says:

This was apparent even in public worship. [Idolatry]. The whole cultus had a theatrical tendency; processions constituted a large part of it. . . Buffoonery and pantomimes [clowns and movies] became popular. . . the adventures of deceived husbands, adulteries and amorous intrigues formed the staple of the plots [as yet]. Virtue was made a mock of, and the gods scoffed at; every thing sacred and worthy of veneration was dragged in the mire. In obscenity, unveiled and unambiguous, in impure speeches and exhibitions which outraged the sense of shame [a word now lost from social dictionaries], these spectacles exceeded all besides. Ballet dancers threw away their dresses and danced half naked and even wholly naked on the stage. [American females walk the streets in nearly that condition—natural to apes!]

Pages of this book would be needed to outline the conditions of ancient paganism that are being reproduced in modern civilization, fast accentuated since schools have been teaching monkey-science (evolution). Whether the blue or green would win a race was about the most important thought or interest. "Love of praise and desire for victory" were accounted noble virtues. Such was the very acme of heathen culture. Amusement was the chief care of high society. "Bread and games" at public expense was the popular demand. Labor was despised, and a quiet life was loathed—just as this generation is being trained. Paul's injunction "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands" (1 Thes. 4:11) has special application under such conditions. So with "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life" (1 Tim. 2:2); "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" (1 Peter 3:4); "that with quietness they work and eat their own bread" (2 Thes. 3:12). The excitement of games (as all other) is contrary



to the Holy Spirit, and also contrary to both mental and physical health. In the early church those devoted to sports, especially actors and fencing-masters in gladiatorial schools, were refused baptism unless they quit those occupations. And if a church member resorted to such occupations he was excluded from fellowship. Clement of Alexandria, an early Christian writer, said of some violent games that it is not sport to engage in such cruel and sometimes fatal contests. Football is surely in this bad bunch—a folly and insult to creation.

The place athletics has in modern schools especially invites comment here. Comparison between the manhood and scholarship of former generations not having athletics and the present one stuffed with it does not support the claims for its use. Apart from the spiritual point we are considering, medical and other testimony contradict the mistaken zeal of educators. The simple fact is that they are too shallow and spineless to refuse the petulant cry of spoiled children who want play instead of work while getting hypocritical college honors to boost them in business and society. Foolish parents support the sham. Hypocritical certainly are college degrees telling of literary attainments given to youngsters who know and care for little else than play. It is unfair to rank sports with serious things. The Ph.D. of today may hardly mean more than that one is qualified for a job in a gymnasium! Where philosophy (love of wisdom) comes in does not appear. Maybe it's only a psychogram. When sluggers call for it, a university course will be provided in prize-fighting, and noble prospective champions will strut to the ring pre-garlanded with the ancient and honorable Ph.D. which their stupid forbears supposed to denote proficiency in philosophy!

The mischief of distraction from school athletics has been noticed some in the public press, and needs more

serious attention. Mental vigor can not develop in an atmosphere of play and spectacular appeal. Not even the physical is helped by athletics, but hindered. Moderation in all things is a law of well-being. It is one of the specific fruits of the Spirit. Even school-supervised athletics can not eliminate the mischief of abnormal excitement of physical elements, especially through bad psychical influence. Even in this, sowing to the flesh reaps some corruption. Physicians report abnormal nerve and muscle conditions peculiar to athletes. Normal processes are quiet and orderly. Whatever disturbs them immoderately produces tension or explosion. The relations of emotions and glandular actions explain the mystery of life processes in some important bearings. Brain storm, gland drunkenness and muscle fury result from lack of control—immoderation, excess. Athletic excitement<sup>t</sup> is no exception. Its championship is not of value beyond the arena of its play—its crown is very corruptible. And its pride often goes before a fall.

In his pamphlet "NERVE FORCE", Paul von Boeckmann scores athletics severely, making an unfavorable showing from merely physical considerations. Athletic training and practice develop a special muscular nerve force, but at the expense of other important elements. Athletes are short-lived and have sluggish undeveloped mental faculties. Years of observation in professional practice brought out evidence that athletes are generally moral cowards. The cry for "red-blood religion" is a delusion, as shown by Von Boeckmann's reports, as well as by Scriptural testimony. Physical and moral courage seldom are combined. Weak bodies are often accompanied by strong moral courage. Just as Paul said, God uses the weak of this world to accomplish his moral and spiritual ends. *Mens sana in corpore sano* (a sound mind in a sound body) is the cry again, but it



does not check with history, the great events of which have been promoted by men sometimes of afflicted body. Noted athletes have been victims of so-called scientific exercise. The fact that most athletes die of tuberculosis and pneumonia is cited by Von Boeckmann as evidence against the excessive physical strain of athletics. He also calls attention to the effect of strenuous physical exercise in stunting the development of the brain, adding: "Is it not a well-known fact that our noted athletes, even those in our colleges, are not overburdened with brain?" The effects of physical over-training on nerve force and heart action prove the folly of emphasizing the physical. The intellectual and spiritual in man should be supreme just as the Bible teaches and as becomes those made in the image of God. The laws of the Kingdom of Heaven as expressed in the Beatitudes make no reference to the physical, but only to the spiritual. The temporal physical is best conserved by subordination to the eternal spiritual.

But did not Paul say that bodily exercise profits a little? So some defend athletics in religious schools and societies. Paul was not referring at all to physical exercise as we mean it. He was cautioning Timothy (in 1 Tim. 4:1-8) against certain conspicuous religious practices of the time—asceticism, with its abstinences and penances; its mortifications and severities practiced on the body. Fastings, flagellations, climbing to temples on the knees, torturing the body in various ways as acts of piety—such were the "exercises" of little benefit, but real godliness is of full and permanent profit. There is no relation between physical exercise and the Kingdom of Heaven. Mere physical exercise, in itself, is not the thing involved in this matter, but the principles that are back of and all through athletics and such sports. Remove the elements of contest, pride and vainglory, with

attendant excitement, and the games so richly valuable and important as "exercise" would quickly lose their appeal and patronage. Ph.D. in physical culture would cease to attract aspiring youth.

Motive and purpose are the determinative factors in conduct—"as he thinks *in his heart* so is he." Special emphasis is placed on this in the Bible because it deals with finals—the eternal. We are to decide and do all things with reference to God, particularly imitating his incarnate Son as our example.

Whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.—Col. 3:17.

Whether you eat or drink, or do anything, do all with reference (Greek *eis*, referential) to the glory of God.—1 Cor. 10:31.

Motive and object are here positively and completely emphasized. "Whatsoever" covers athletics. Both the mischievous effects and the wrong spiritual attitudes exclude from any thought of God's honor, or acting in the name of the Lord Jesus. Christian schools grieve the Holy Spirit by athletics. The absence of the Spirit from even church schools is noticeable and ominous in these days. What mean the pagan performances that appear in college chapel programs—the conspicuously emphasized parts? A visit to "chapel" at a Methodist university I attended when a young budding preacher brought some surprise, even though its fall into some modern ditches was understood. Little was there to suggest reverence or devotion. True to the demand for youthful self-expression, some students of both sexes spoke some semi-religio-dramatic pieces, after which the "meeting" was turned over to the foot-ball gang. What those boys did in excitement, noise and frenzy beat any camp-meeting of their shouting ancestors. Even a new "Roller" or "Jumper" performance is tame beside it. A little back, we referred to certain attitudes of mind as



idolatrous. That foot-ball chapel ritual (so it appeared to be) had marked resemblance to a real heathen idol-service. Following some demonstrations of excitement by the crowd under direction of the leader, that young man became violent as in a psychical frenzy. His face became tense, his eyes fixed, his gaze directed to the floor a little in front. Suddenly, with violent waiving of arms disheveling his long locks and a peculiar yell (Indian-like and seemingly ritualistic), he flung his body violently forward till his hands touched the floor. Recovering quickly, he repeated the performance twice and retired in the manner of one satisfied with having done his devotions well. "Chapel" was over!!

Have our church schools become idolators of the cult of Athletics? That young man functioned as a priest of idolatrous cults does. The similitude was too plain. Such a performance in exaltation of foot-ball can not be to any honor of God. It has no relation whatever to Christ, and what is not for him is against him, by his own word. Motives are not neutral. Devotion to athletics means honor to this world-order of which Satan is god. Athletics can not be tolerated in any Christian school of any grade whatever.

God not only forbids strife and vainglory, but he also enjoins the opposite virtue—"in lowliness of mind esteeming others as excelling yourselves." What? Let the other fellows appear better than me when I know that I could lick every one of them in a game? What a bombshell is the humility command in the camps of athletic and other contests! Just pigs fighting over a trough is all that any game looks like to those in heaven. That is what it looks like to those here who have the spiritual mind. The natural mind is animal, but born-again minds are spiritual. The church should not nourish the beastly life of the flesh but the miracle-life

of the spirit. They who live after the flesh can not please God. Christians mortify the deeds of the body. Church schools are doing violence to their profession in their nurture of fleshly lusts which war against the soul. All indications are that athletic-ridden schools are dead to the spiritual, and endanger the souls of students. The wise will keep far away and warn others.

But, should not the young have relaxation in games of recreation? All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, you know. No; I don't know. My experience of many years in study and labor, with little diversion, is that one can be mentally livelier at sixty-five than at fifteen. The best antidote to dullness is to live in the eternal spirit of truth. Young folks usually get what relaxation is needed without any drive in exciting contests. Only a special scientist in sport can see any rest in game tension. Reaction from the strain of excited action is more harmful than is severe labor, or even ordinary idleness. Do athletic games have the recreational value so much attributed to them? Competent medical testimony says "No". A physician who was professor of Biology, Physiology and Hygiene in a college which I attended always insisted that any possible physical benefit from athletics is so small that games are a waste of time. He said that any physical exercise merely for its own sake is almost useless. Athletics had no place at that school then.

Self-centered action in any sphere is harmful. No one lives to himself. To try it is suicidal. Nature itself punishes the abnormal way of selfishness. "Look not every one on his own things (only), but also on the things of others." Normal and healthful life is social. Motives and purposes must be altruistic to be Christian. Egoism is entirely unsocial. Game-mad crowds are not social but partisan. Party-spirit, or competitive sympathies,



prevent a really social attitude. Self-conscious physical exercise, so to speak, is a waste of energy. Dr. Sperry told us boys that, should we need extra exercise occasionally (not required daily), instead of idly romping with balls or other childish playthings, we would better shoulder a sawbuck and bucksaw, go hunting for some poor widow's woodpile, and get busy (as seriously as though on a stadium). The spiritual force back of such effort, influencing the glandular activity, benefits the muscles and stimulates the entire being to better life. No rivalry poisons heart or brain or glands. No yells tell of excitement. No tawdry glamor praises one, nor fictitious disgrace shames another. But to each one is a "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of thy Lord"—eternal. God-men are happy (Blessed) in humbly helping poor and obscure widows. Only the swine-men prefer games.

In the degenerate days of Rome athletic games were in their special glory. The whole population was intoxicated with the lust of the eyes for the spectacular, and with the pride of life that grasped after play-power in the waning of real power as barbarians invaded. The childish show of play-power pleased fancies enervated by licentiousness and luxury, until the nation became game-mad. America is morally and spiritually dazed from following false leaders, and is madly chasing play-bubbles to help her smile while tumbling to ruin. Pride persists in prowling where dark danger likes to lurk. If any do not see the signs of the times, they deliberately shut their eyes, else are blinded by the god of this world. Strife, contest, even in school play, is utterly repugnant to God and to those who partake of his nature.

Contention, antagonism, between fellows violates essential love. All who are born of God love fellow-men and can not seek advantage, power or honor over them

in any way. Only play? Then why the serious emphasis, the expense, the permanent display of superiority by winners? Why the quarreling, fighting and violence so often accompanying? Reports of school games telling how one class "trounced" another mean an attitude other than love, which is kind, envies not, vaunts not itself, is not puffed-up, seeks not its own. It is astonishing that those professing to conduct Christian schools emphasize a training of children and young people in attitudes that make them callous to the best in heart and life—not only the best, but the essential in true life. Seared conscience, insensible to truth, Scripture says, is a mark of departure from the faith in following false and diabolical teachers. Consciences tender to truth are now scarce, while religion is largely conventional humbug. Schools that teach athletics do much to foster the swinish attitude in contrast to the spiritual—they are modern swineherds.

But children must have play. Children? Why not leave it with them? College and university students are not children, and should put away childish things. This plea for school sports is an admission that they are childish. What proof is there that normal children, uncoached, would invent games involving the wrong elements we here condemn? Jesus cited children playing in imitation of social customs involving no rivalry. American teachers would divide them into competing "sides", and offer prizes for the loudest piping and best mourning! Play ceases to be play when made a means of gain. And the worst gain is that which exalts one by the shame of his fellow.

Relief from strain of study? Exchange one kind of strain for another, doubling the nerve tension! How smart evolved monkeys are becoming! Strain in educational processes is as absurdly abnormal as strain in



agricultural processes. The farmer sows, waits, reaps without excitement or strain. He trusts natural forces. God surely knows how to conform to his own creation and gave the formula for conducting the biggest educational program in the universe—teaching and training mankind for the Kingdom of Heaven. Farmers make no contests between grains of wheat, but leave them to the natural development of inherent qualities brought into proper relation to nourishing influences. Jesus followed such course with his School of Christianity. He simply taught his students (disciples) the truths they needed and left them to use it as they would, some being more productive than others—some thirty-fold, some sixty, others one-hundred. Without cramming or contests, there was no strain. No “degrees” were offered to incite pride to make extra effort. Christians, being in the Kingdom of Heaven and having its laws (principles) within, express them in every relation of life, including school work. Compulsion, pressure, goading, hot-house forcing produce freaks that please abnormal fancies, but insult the simplicity of God in his integrity. The true teaching, as the farming, formula is stated in

So is the kingdom (rule, administration, procedure, method) of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how. For the earth brings forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe he immediately puts in the sickle because the harvest is come.—Mark 4: 26-29.

Reform is needed in modern educational methods. No artificial strain is needed in sane mental training more than in simple wheat raising. Normal young minds respond to natural processes. Others would do less mischief if left in crude incompetence.

Simplicity and sincerity know no strain. They are of the faith that is not anxious. They rest in the hope

that recognizes the Eternal. To college students comes that gentle voice of helpful sympathy, as he sees the extra and useless toil—the worrying and grinding part due to strife and pride for position or profit or honor, including strain over “exams”—even the voice of Jesus saying: “Come.”

Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy-laden, take my yoke upon you (instead of the world's) and learn of me. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Scramble for vain world positions and honors is hardest work and most wearing, especially because of emotional uncertainties attending strife of ambition. The play of these on nerves and glands affects both soul (*pshche*) and body injuriously. Soul-tire is the more severe. Coming into the spiritual order in Christ, the soul finds rest, for the spirit can not tire, being immortal, and strengthens the soul. Again it is a pleasure to repeat: “Blessed (immortal) are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” May every reader truly say the *Amen*.

But did not the apostle Paul commend athletics, including foot-racing and boxing, at least? He said that he had fought a good fight and finished his course, alluding to games as symbolizing certain phases of the Christian experience. Hurrah for Paul as a good sport because he approved them by using the illustration? A second thought cautions. Elsewhere Paul alludes to athletics as mere beating the air, and useless running for all but the one winner. Paul only casually referred to familiar things as helping to make vivid a point of emphasis. To try to make the illustration “go on all-fours” is otherwise significant—quite in line with the athletic catering to the whine for bones and the grunt for swill. Really educated men note the situation with much regret and some protest. But the shallow and



superficial are in control and refuse the way of wisdom and safety. In speaking of life as a race or struggle, Paul expressly indicates that no competition or rivalry appears among those engaged. The course is freely open to all, and every one who follows faithfully the rules (Christian teachings) wins the crown of life. Note that no runner keeps watch of others as rivals in the race, to see who is ahead, but all look to Jesus as the example who ran the same course, marking the path and setting the pace. "If I will that he tarry until I come, what is that to you? You follow me." Watching others tends to envy, jealousy and rivalry. Keeping up is not enough; one wants to get ahead of the Joneses. It was envy that led Satan to rebel from God, and envy is back of much sin by men. It is bad business to have school programs that stimulate envy through rivalries. Athletics has received our special attention because of its prominence, but other things come under similar indictment as involving the same wrongs of strife, pride and vainglory. Contests, debates, comparisons—every scheme for showing distinctions violates the first laws of spiritual life—humility and love. It is hypocrisy to pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," while actively cultivating the very opposite. Who are wise enough to repent in this?

So conspicuous (except among stupid teachers) is the evil of school athletics in some ways, that newspaper editors are commenting from the merely obvious view regardless of deeper spiritual considerations. Charges are made of favoritism to athletic students in ratings and promotions, as well as in helping to employment. More notice is given them than to "mere students". In college periodicals prominence is given to reports of local athletic and dramatic events, with oratorical contests, until it looks as though these are all the schools

are doing. Serious subjects see scant space in modern college papers. A recent newspaper comment on the athletic college craze read :

In a perfectly ordered world that situation would not exist. But it stands today and probably will remain until substantial changes in human nature are effected. The situation exists because football and allied sports are more spectacular than pouring over books.

This unintentionally checks with our findings that athletics is contrary to nature and to Christianity. The correction is by substituting in man the divine for the human inclinations. Lust of the eyes and pride of life that crave the spectacular give place to appreciation for nobler things, even for truth, wisdom and righteousness. Religiousness that fails here is sheer humbug. Professedly Christian schools that work contrary to the law of modesty are traitors to the Kingdom of Heaven and enemies of mankind, preventing and undoing what the gospel of the kingdom offers in Jesus Christ, friend of sinners—the new life of the spirit instead of the fleshly existence. Here is another call to repent.

#### THE SIMPLE AND COMMONPLACE

The sum of the matter is simply that display of any kind and looking for the praise of men do not put one in the list of the Blessed. Jesus, the Messiah, "made himself of no reputation." He even "emptied himself" of the original glory he had with the Father, in order to become like a man to redeem the world. He did not belong to any athletic team or Greek-letter society. He never acted a part in a dramatic play or spouted in an oratorical contest. He wore no badge or uniform. He curried no applause for cleverness. He even evaded a popular movement to make him king in a worldly way. He merely "went about doing good." We walk in light only as we follow him in sincerity.



Even commonplaces of humdrum life have a thrill of glory when done with reference to the Lord. When the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit there is nothing little in its proper care. When our companions and neighbors are also divine persons (as all real Christians are) there is nothing small or unworthy in any attention or service we can do them. A cup of cold water given to the humblest and most obscure, because of Christ, is recorded and rewarded in heaven. When our lives are so disposed and conducted we never weary of monotony. A thrill of divine pleasure may come to one who, walking alone on a country road, stoops to pick up and toss out of the way a piece of broken glass to save possible tire trouble to an unknown driver, or to protect some bare-footed child. Doing to the least is done to Christ, if in a right spirit. No real Christian woman thinks housework a drudgery. Nor does any real man feel bored by home chores. No boy or girl, properly brought up, feels any need of games at school or elsewhere beyond the natural expression of the child-mind. No applause is needed to incite to extra effort when we live unto the Lord. He, himself, is our "exceeding great reward" (Gen. 15:1). Co-workers with God need no hurraing spectators to fan into pride-zeal. The divine life is its own ample incentive. Instead of looking for flattering applause, we keep the left hand from knowing what the right hand does. Amazing stupidity or blindness holds many in the power of pride. Commenting on the old persistent rivalry between the "Twin Cities" of Minnesota, a newly-made "archbishop" who pretends to succeed an apostle, is quoted as saying:

Such enthusiasm is merely the evidence of the confidence of a people in themselves; of a responding to the higher aspirations of the human soul.

Of all the stupid twaddle by devil-blinded pagans this

surely is the champion specimen. Utterly blind to the most elemental thing in godliness, such a man dares to claim apostolic authority, and stupid crowds adore. It checks with the proud ignorance of this bragging age when the world by its smart wisdom knows not God.

Humility is so important and so liable to violation by even the most spiritual, that God sometimes protects us in it by sending special affliction, as Paul's thorn, a peculiar agent from Satan. Divine humility is so little appreciated that most people prefer pride though it excludes from heaven. "Poor in spirit" means genuine humility that thinks modestly of self, appreciates others and acts impartially. Self-commendation is excluded as boasting. Bragging advertising is excluded, with all flattery, ostentation and conceit. Andrew Murray wrote:

Pride must die in you or nothing of heaven can live in you. . .

The call to humility has been too little regarded in the church because its true nature and importance have been too little apprehended. . . . Humility is simply acknowledging the truth of one's position as creature, and yielding to God his place.

And Anon wrote :

So much as you have pride, you have of the fallen angel alive in you ; so much as you have of true humility, so much you have of the Lamb of God within you.

Divine quality is the one essential. It is offered freely and fully in the Gospel of the Kingdom. But we must repent (change our attitude of mind) before God can give it to us. We must be receptive—not resentful even of the criticism that exposes our need. "For their's is the Kingdom of Heaven." Is, not will be; for that Kingdom (the realm of all good) *belongs* to the poor in spirit—they are adapted to one another. More, they are inseparable. As we partake of the spiritual nature we are Immortal—blessed, happy, Godlike.



## THE MOURNERS

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*Blessed are they that mourn;  
for they shall be comforted.*

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HERE is something surely very contrary to the common notion. Looks contradictory, does it not? Blessed, happy, fortunate, to be congratulated—immortal—are they that mourn! Yes; but——. Jesus did not say Blessed are the cowardly cry-babies, the whiners, nor even the unfortunate, disappointed or bereaved in ordinary ways. The Sermon-on-the-Mount was a revolution in thought from the notions both of Jews and Gentiles. It is now a protest against the perverted thinking and acting of nominal Christendom. Jesus did not put a premium on occasional whimpering, or on real grief as mere stir of emotion, although he sympathizes in such cases—"He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Christ took upon himself the burdens of mankind. He did not spend time seeking amusement, but "went about doing good" and teaching the people. He found satisfaction, even pleasure, in sharing others' troubles. They are close of kin to him who do likewise, even to sorrowing with and over others. "Blessed are they that mourn."

While this is all quite true, it is not the sum of this beatitude, nor its main point. Jesus spoke on general principles, even fundamental ones, of the inner real life. Serious-mindedness is the idea, *versus* the too common frivolous, unworthy attitude toward life and its responsibilities. This frivolous, giggling, jaz-intoxicated, joy-riding, pleasure-seeking and lust-mad generation does

not have from Christ the approval given by many who now sit in Moses' seat as directors of modernized molly-coddle religion until even churches are little more than playhouses. He can not pronounce any benediction over the mad rage for fun, for entertainment, for the tickling of physical senses and the thrill of psychical sentiments marking an age that boasts of its enlightened freedom in the alleged scientific "gospel" of Evolution. "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" was predicted of later generations. So far has the fun-consciousness developed that life is called a game and death laughed at as only an adventure into the unknown post-evolution. Such an attitude naturally cheapens appreciation of all human values until roads and streets are becoming a big slaughter-pen, and gun-play is the conspicuous item on newspaper pages.

Serious-mindedness is everywhere commended and enjoined in the word of God, where it is called soberness. This sobriety means simple dignity and good sense as becomes those of God's family. It does not mean fanatical austerity, or the long-facedness of Puritans or such. Those were not Christians, but Ebionites. Real godliness is happy and joyous, only sometimes in heaviness under severe trial. Even under the old imperfect Jewish order (dispensation), emphasis was put on the joy of service, even of religious ceremonies. Fasts had a special use, but feasting was more the order. So far were early Christians from long-faced notions that they regarded the eating of the Lord's Supper as an occasion of joy, not grief. They said thanks to God, so the name eucharist for the ceremony. They did not go down on their knees and let a priest put a crumb of bread and a thimble-full of raisin-water to their mouths—an insult to the Lord. They did not hang their heads with eyes shut, as though ashamed of the body and blood that



ransomed a lost world. They did not weep over the memory of the cross, knowing that Christ's work of atonement was completed. He suffered once for all, we are told. The notion of repeated sacrifices, as in the Roman mass, is an insult to Christ, denying his "It is finished", and also making it appear that his work was so ineffectual as to require repeated additional offerings. The Corinthians went too far with the feast idea, and corrupted the Eucharist in carnal stupidity. Holy joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, but its expression is sane and wholesome, not the drivel of drunken dogs, which carnal joy often is. Sunday was not a day for fasting or groaning in the early church, as with Puritans in later times, but a day for pleasure and feasting, not in riot of fleshly lust but in rational spiritual dignity. It was a rule not to kneel in prayer, public or private, on this day which spoke of victory over death and the grave, so acts of humiliation were not in order. Yet, in my boyhood church a member who failed to kneel while the "preacher" prayed was considered impious. It is now generally supposed to be necessary (in non-liturgical places) to bow the head and close the eyes during any prayer. But Jesus commended and practiced (except on special occasions) standing, even with eyes looking upward. Such is especially fitting when "saying grace" at meals. "Thank you" with hanging head and shut eyes does not suggest glad appreciation. A better way is to look up with a soft smile before sitting down at table—not omitting a thought of glad gratitude to the Father of all mercies. Eating with gladness without gloom is good health as well as good piety. Saying the blessing is not calling down a blessing on the meal, as commonly supposed, but offering a blessing or thanks to God. When Jesus looked up to heaven and blessed, as we read, he simply followed the Jewish ritual which

gave blessing to God, as Creator, for the food and wine which his kindness provided. In our circumstances and language the blessing would be about this:

Blessed art thou, O God, Creator, Preserver, Benefactor and Redeemer, for all thy mercies through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Uttered from a truly appreciative and grateful heart, a few such words say and mean more than a whole page of details in a prayer-book read ritually.

Piety that excludes all humor is not Christian. The apostle did not prohibit all pleasantry when he said to cut out jesting that is not convenient. Current English would read "proper" instead of "convenient". Paul used a Greek word signifying facetiousness, or coarse wit of scurrilous order. This has no reference to clean humor of mere friendly playfulness. With all his troubles, the apostle shows keen appreciation of pertinent wit, sometimes making sharp plays on words which must be read in the Greek to catch the points. Taking life seriously in Christian faith and hope does not mean brooding or pining in despairing wails of gloom. "For they shall be comforted" wipes away the tears from all who really mourn. Some say that all laughter is forbidden in all Scripture, but Luke 6:21 (for example) contradicts the claim. It is safe and wise to look for the "also written".

So seriousness, sobriety, real dignity, do not exclude cheerfulness nor simple spontaneous humor. Silliness, vulgarity, filthiness are of unregenerate minds. When we take a square look at the world's humor we note a large trend in these directions. Comic papers and the "funny sections" of newspapers are a shame to professedly intelligent journalism, and a plain confirmation of Christ's designation of some people as dogs and hogs interested in filth and swill. If professing Christians would practice piety enough to boycott indecent publications, the broom would soon get busy in newspaper



and magazine offices. By indecent is not meant only obscene but whatever is unbecoming good character and conduct. To see what is going on, I but rarely glance at comics in a newspaper, finding all to be coarse, some brutal, all applauding cheap smartness, and, among the worst, an encouragement of children to disrespect for elders, even parents. What Jesus said about the guilt of those who mislead the young applies here. The fun-mad caricature of life now prevalent spells ruin. The money-cost of just fun is enormous, besides the waste of time, talent and character. "Blessed" does not apply to fun-makers or fun-seekers.

But, while escaping the fanaticism of gloomy piety as the sometimes mistaken interpretation and application of the mourning God approves, we need to hold to the truth that soberness is always both becoming and important. Even spiritual joy is not wild in expression; so happy Christians may seem somber to giddy girls. No carnal "kick" is in the hilarity mentioned in Rom. 12:8 and 2 Cor. 9:7, where the Greek for "cheerful" means, literally, hilarious. A common interpretation of the mourning mentioned in the Beatitude makes it mean grief for sin. That, of course, has its proper place. But when sins are forgiven and the heart is renewed in righteousness, such mourning ceases. Passages like Is. 25:8 and 61:2,3 (noting here the "spirit of heaviness") seem to refer to a more permanent state of mind suggesting melancholy—not melancholia as a hypochondric delusion, but as a temperament. This would fit Rev. 21:4 as assuring complete change of former states of living.

In his essay "The Four Temperaments", Alexander Whyte says that the melancholy temperament accompanies, even marks, the deepest thinkers and the most capable men in all history. He cites Aristotle as saying that all men of genius have this temperament. They

take life seriously, having broader, higher and deeper understanding of its importance. Greed for fun means a shallow and trifling mind. Emphasis on play marks the superficial educational work of our day. Serious minds, seeing the trend of things, would well worry as to the end, if without assurance that the gates of hell can not prevail. Removal of sorrow and tears promised in Rev. 21:4 (cited above) does not mean that proper seriousness will pass away, but all trouble experienced by it in this evil-beset world. Tradition says that no smile was ever seen on the face of Jesus. As victim for man's redemption Jesus was bearing the sin, shame and suffering of the world even before the time of the cross; so sorrow, not smiles, became him. He was serious from childhood. He was pattern man as well as Saviour, so it is right to cite his conduct as our guide. His early life contradicts the notion that children must be incited to play even beyond natural inclination. At twelve, the boy Jesus was disposed and able to discuss serious religious questions with Rabbis and other D.Ds. of the theological school in Jerusalem. He wanted to be about his Father's work even then. No more now than then is God's business fun-making or frivolity of any kind. Granted? So, as all Christians are co-workers with God, they have no right to make play programs in schools and churches. Jesus was an example of normal life in childhood as well as in maturity. Whyte says:

Let a more than ordinary depth of thought be found in any man, and that man's mind will naturally and necessarily move among the mysteries, the solemnities, the sadnesses, and the awful issues of human life, till, as sure as shadow follows substance, that man is a melancholy man. And thus it is that when, either in life or in literature, you meet with a man of extraordinary depth of thought, you will see shafts of sadness and chasms of melancholy sinking down into that man's mind and heart and character—clefts and chasms that will offend, exasperate, and scare away all light-minded and shallow-hearted onlookers.



But such melancholy tends to a seeking for the way of life, resulting in the joy of consolation in eternal truth and righteousness. "For they shall be comforted" said the Master, and "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy". Paul wrote the Corinthians: "as you are partakers of the suffering, so shall you be also of the consolation". The "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" knew that the final issue of such sadness is in the haven of God's bliss, so he could say to his disciples and to the crowd: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." The serious-minded are most likely to walk with God in their own hearts. As Whyte says,

No man carries his head high there. No man looks down on his neighbor there. He may be the most intellectual of men; he may be the most spiritual of men, and if only he is both, then you have the humblest man that ever was on this side of heaven.

Mourning? The best of all our mourning comes in the consciousness of our weakness, ignorance, imperfection, unworthiness and sinfulness, though the heart hungers for all righteousness, virtue and goodness. This is quite contrary to the usual attitude of conceit, self-sufficiency or self-congratulation that glories in self-expression. A good illustration is the case of the Pharisee and publican praying in the temple. The publican mourned for his sins, feeling so cheap and ashamed that he hung his head and barely murmured "God be merciful to me a sinner." He was comforted with forgiveness. But the proud, self-righteous Pharisee, who dared to brag to God about his own goodness, was only laughed at for his silly presumption. Some now try to make it appear that self-depreciation (inferiority complex) is about the worst sin, but God has a different opinion. His approval of the publican's self-depreciation is an encouragement to be like-minded. Let us adopt God's opinion. When one reaches such a state of mourning he surely becomes a

partaker of immortality ; for none so mourn until they are touched by the hunger for eternal righteousness. Such mourners surely will be fully comforted. Such sorrow, as some one has said, "reveals love of the good." To love is to have, in the spiritual kingdom. God is good and he is love. Whoever has true love (not the literary stuff mis-labled love) is born of God and knows God. His mourning will be turned into joy unspeakable and full of glory. What is the end of all the giggling nonsense of this fun-mad generation? Repent—turn about—should be the order of the day.

The "good times" anticipated by the Jews when the Messiah should come were in the line of festivities and carnal rejoicings. But he disappointed such hopes in his teaching and conduct. He even declared mourners to be the happy (blessed) ones in the divine order. Not a word of commendation or toleration did Christ offer to te-hee, ha-ha minds. He saved holy things for such as could appreciate them. Frivolity is not a natural expression of life, but an artificial explosion of perverted interests—a whistling to cover cowardice towards the sober responsibilities of being. All nature is serious and sensible. Trifling is an invention of perverted minds and depraved hearts. Giggling belongs to the shallow. Love of pleasure is incompatible with love of God and all good. Heaven will not be a playhouse ; nor should a church be one. Noise is not music. Rag and jazz and all such trumperry indicate unsound mentality. The sounds of nature are largely in the minor key, not only the delicate ones but even the heavier. Wind sighs in forests and waves roar solemnly along seashores. Many birds sing sorrowful notes, and dogs howl dismally. Cats mew mournfully, and even pigs squeal and grunt in painful tones. The bleat of sheep, the low of cattle and the neigh of horses suggest distress. A baby's crys and



a mother's croons or lullabies do not have joyful tones. Splash of falling waters and crash of falling trees stir no giggle, but suggest danger from broken nature. Pattering rain and booming thunder do not invite to play on the lawn, but drive to shelter. All have their place and meaning. What is the meaning of all this mourning? The fall of man. All creation felt the shock and groans in pain until redemption is completed. That is a serious work. Levity hinders. Just what the coming comfort will be we can not know now, but we may be sure it will not be anything trifling or undignified—no sport-life. "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."

#### PESSIMISTIC PIETY

However commendable is seriousness, there is nothing in our subject to warrant the pessimistic perversion so persistently propagated by certain who (mis)represent themselves as the very cream of the elect and the only ones who know the truth. Claiming special piety in believing every word in the Bible from cover to cover to have been dictated by the Holy Spirit (calling it verbal inspiration), they contradict Scripture in this and insult the Lord by crass perversion of his kingdom teachings. Pessimism is nowhere the note in Scripture. On the contrary, hope for and confidence in the triumph of truth are everywhere emphasized. Even where very bad conditions are predicted, the assurance is given of victory through faith and steadfastness. "According to your faith be it unto you." The Jews did not believe Jesus to be Christ, so lost him. Modern pessimism about the power of the Gospel of the Kingdom is a hindrance to its work. By faith and testimony we are to overcome.

Pious pessimists magnify the warning of Paul to his assistant, Timothy, (2 Tim. 3:13): "Wicked men and imposters will become worse, deceiving and deceived."

They make it include present-day hordes of false cults and assert the helplessness of Christendom against the evil. Calling themselves believers in Christ, they fail to credit his assurance of security and complete victory. With eyes like microscopes, they read verse 13, but shut them to verse 14, reading: "But you continue in the things you have learned and been assured of." Thus hope holds against assaults of deceivers, if we stick to the Gospel teaching. Many are now ensnared because they fail to study the New Testament and hold fast its plain doctrines. Paul did not tell Timothy that false teachers would become so numerous as to upset Christianity. He was encouraging Timothy to be faithful in presence of persecution (verse 12), even though it was to become worse. This was to occur during Timothy's activity as evangelist. Paul had no thought of far future times, whatever may have developed. Earlier in the chapter the apostle mentioned the development of dangerous times requiring special care by Timothy in his work, which limits the matter to that period, though similar advice would fit later like conditions. But Paul assured that the evil specifically mentioned would be of short duration (verse 9)—another proof that Paul did not write for present-day pessimists who claim him for the prophet of their pessimism. Not pessimistic but optimistic, was Paul's message. He would testify in like manner now. Bad as present conditions are, God is on his throne, and neither Evolution, Spiritism or Atheism, or all combined, will triumph. When all evils combine for the final big battle they will be suddenly prevented by a consuming fire from above. Lift up your heads, you pessimists. Mourn, but do not despair. Jesus said that we should always pray and never despair (which is the better rendering). Prayer brings hope and help. "They shall be comforted."



The cult of religious pessimism goes so far in its zeal for contradicting Scripture as to claim the two most emphatic kingdom parables—parables of hope—which our Lord uttered. They presume to dare to say that the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven were pessimistic, when they were plainly optimistic. They say that birds signified evil beings wherever mentioned in the Bible, so when Jesus likened the Kingdom of Heaven to mustard seeds which grow into small trees affording nesting places for birds, he taught that wicked people would make themselves conspicuous in Christianity by claiming its shelter—implying that good people are too scarce for notice. They seem to read only such passages as fit their fancy; for the Bible makes no such showing about birds. The parable offers no hint that birds would spoil the mustard shrubs. Its very obvious lesson is, as all but the pessimistic sect understand, that, although Christianity began very small it has become very great so that many find safe shelter in it. Even if birds were symbols of the wicked, Christ is expressly for such and asks them to come to him for rest from sin and shame. Some Pharisees, are these pessimists who tremble at the danger God and his Kingdom are in, as were those who were scared when they saw Jesus sitting at table with sinners! God was not afraid when swallows (birds) built nests in the shelter of the Temple—not far from the Shekinah in the Holy-of-Holies.

Still worse is the insolent and blasphemous teaching of the pious Pessimists about the parable of the leaven which a woman used in making bread. They assert that the Bible invariably represents leaven as evil power or influence, therefore this parable can only mean that corrupting doctrines are to be introduced among Christians. Corrupt doctrines are plentiful and disastrous, it is too true, but the leaven-parable has no reference to

the matter whatever. Leaven is not invariably bad in the Bible, though circumstances involving the use of the term often give it bad association. The primary idea or suggestion in leaven is of an active and pervasive influence which changes the character of its immediate environment (scientifically stated). The nature of the influence is secondary. In Bible usage, circumstances make the symbolism of leaven sometimes very unfavorable. While leaven was forbidden in some Jewish ceremonies, it was prescribed in others. Leaven was used in ordinary table bread. Its inhibition during the Passover celebration was not due to any essential evil in it, but because of the haste and hardship of the original event. The fact that leavened bread and fermented grape juice (wine) were common foods contradicts the extravagant denunciation of leaven. If it were intrinsically evil some caution or direction would have been issued against its use in food. If ferment were only evil Jesus would not have made wine for a wedding feast, nor drunk wine with companions, nor appointed it to represent his blood in the Eucharist. But some say that only grape juice was meant, and some use raisin water. But the word for wine in the Greek Testament is *oinos* which always meant fermented liquor (wine or beer). The apostolic "nothing is unclean of itself" fits right here. But Paul (citing the Lord Jesus for authority in this) was not a pessimistic hobby-rider willing to twist truth and insult God to make a show of wisdom in appearing (to the ignorant) to prove his claim.

That this reproof of the pessimists is proper appears from the plain words of the Lord in the leaven parable. "The Kingdom of Heaven *is like leaven* which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole of it was leavened" (Matt. 13:33). Comment on this in the "Scofield Reference Bible", which is the chief hand-



book of the Pious Pessimists, is enlightening—as to how perversely prejudiced people misuse the word of God to make it appear to teach their propaganda. Besides the untrue statement (like others in the “Scofield”) that leaven invariably means corruption in Scripture, these comments manufacture queer notions of interpretation of the whole parable. Leaven is corrupt doctrine, meal is pure doctrine, the woman is the apostate church that mixes false doctrine with true—and this is what the Kingdom of Heaven is like!! This cult boasts of its fidelity to literal Scripture, and denounces all who spiritualize, yet here “spiritualizes” in a strangely bungling way. The process by which the conclusion is reached does honor to the father of lies who is expert at misusing Scripture. “Jugglers” is what the New Testament calls such false teachers (in Greek). Detailed review of the notes would be interesting, but too long to use here.

Note:- This interpretation says the woman mixes corrupt doctrine (leaven) with pure doctrine (meal) as food for the children of the kingdom. But the parable makes no mention of such children. Nor did Jesus say that the kingdom has any connection with such an ingenious story. He said that the Kingdom of Heaven IS LIKE LEAVEN which, etc. So the wise pessimists are making the Kingdom of Heaven to be corrupt doctrine to be used for mischief—rather a devilish compliment to God! Pious Pessimists prate of being the only real Bible experts. Here is a sample of their devout wisdom. But the obvious meaning of the parable (to untwisted interest) is that, as leaven permeates quietly and thoroughly, so Christianity (as we term it) would transform the susceptible portion of humanity (leaven being put into meal, not stones). Only the working power of the leaven has any bearing in the case. This checks with the chemical fact that fermentation is simply an action

of certain atoms where nitrogen is wanting. Continual motion makes for quick results. And history confirms the parable. In an astonishingly brief time Christianity filled the ancient world, as stated by the apostle Paul. Subsequent corruptions have nothing to do with this parable, which is optimistic instead of pessimistic.

Pessimism is powerless. These people continually complain of the ineffectiveness of their preaching the gospel, blaming it on the infidelity that fills the air. If they would quit the infidelity which their pessimism so plainly spells, they would not be such failures in giving testimony. The editor of a pretentious pessimistic publication bearing a hopeful title said in a signed article:

What can we do in these days when the foundations of our faith are being destroyed? We cannot keep back the avalanche of evil.

With D.D. hooked onto his name, boasting half a century of experience as a gospel preacher, and confessing that his books are the best religious literature, he does not know (or does not believe) the Scripture (which he claims to have been dictated by the Holy Spirit) which states emphatically that there is only one foundation, and that such a secure rock that all men and devils can not even shake it, much less destroy. If the foundations (plural) of the Pessimists' faith (their opinions?) are so fragile, the sooner destroyed the better. Maybe they would then get onto the sure foundation of God. Let those misled people consider such Scripture as 2 Tim. 2:19 and Heb. 12:28. These criticisms are plain, but deserved by people who, so warped, pervert the word of God they claim to especially honor, and denounce as heretics and infidels all who differ from them.

Not blessed are the pessimists, but "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Let us hold fast the confession of our hope unwavering; for the trial of our faith is more precious than that of gold.



## THE MEEK

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*Blessed are the meek ;  
for they shall inherit the earth.*

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HERE is another place for repentance; for meekness is about the most contrary attitude to the world-spirit. In the general view it suggests much the same as "poor in spirit"—humility. But the Greek word has a special significance besides humility. The word "meek" is not a favorite now, and never was. It is not much used yet. The proud, haughty, dictatorial and overbearing have been conspicuous everywhere. The commendation of meekness was startling and hardly credible. The meek are quiet, gentle, retiring, kind, inoffensive, unpretentious, submissive, *toned down*. [How I wish that selfish and exacting youngster next-door who howls horribly until he has his way might be toned down into quiet inconspicuousness—meekness! This parenthesis is not for personal relief, nor to fill space, but to show what meekness means better than formal definitions can. It would be wise for all parents to make their children meek by proper chastisement when the first attempts are made at exacting self-expression. It is yet true that sparing the rod spoils the child. Much of current crime is due to foolish indulgence of child-selfishness—plain animalism]. A meek man is a *gentleman* in the original and worthy meaning of the term.

In the Greek Testament, the word for "meek" means soft, mild, gentle, tame, lowly, humane, lenient. It takes a lot of repenting to change the attitude of mind in this

item so as to bring it into recognition and approval of the proposition that such a quality is particularly good. And it takes yet more of repentance (change of mind) to bring into actual harmony with it. Indeed, one must be born again, born from above, to share in this spirit. The meek obey God and all proper authority without asking why. They do not resent criticism, nor complain of or resist correction. The world glories in spunk that is resentful, retaliating, revengeful. The gentleness, lowliness, tameness—meekness—that swallows pride, endures injury, turns the other cheek, does kindness to an enemy, blesses the insulter, prays for the persecutor and even the crucifier—this is a stumblingblock to the Jew and foolishness to the Gentile, but a power of God unto salvation of men. It is worth while to study what the Bible says about meekness. If that were taught in our schools instead of its opposite (pride and self-assertion) our country would be much better than it is. Now children are stuffed with eulogies of the great in war, in statecraft; in literature, science and art; in exploration, discovery and invention; in philosophy, medicine and finance; in economics and industry—but starved in knowledge of the real benefactors of mankind, the meek, self-forgotten and unthanked teachers of righteousness, virtue and truth. Leave that to Sunday Schools? They have but a portion of the children only a few minutes once a week. And then they are engrossed with other things. Moses? To be sure, he was a great man—a leader, a law-giver, a miracle-worker. The Jews honored him and he has a conspicuous place in the Bible. Occasionally there is a lesson about his exploits. Yes, indeed, he was hidden in the bulrushes when a baby—a great story. Mary Smith recited it so nicely that her teacher bragged about it to the class and stuck a gilt star after her name on the big record card hanging up conspicu-



ously on the bulletin board. Then the class got busy talking about another class that had the best record for attendance last Quarter, and it was voted to try for that championship this Quarter. Then the superintendent rang for attention and announced that the Fidelity Class had the largest collection for the day—one dollar and sixty-seven cents. The secretary reported that Miss Dunn's class won the laurel last month for bringing in the most new members, for which Deacon Brown had offered the fine prize displayed in the window of Gray's drug store. A generous offer was announced from the Bigge Beattie Shoppe of the cutest bob and permanent wave, with full doll paint-up, to the member of the Old Ladies' Bible Class who should make the best record in attendance and deportment during the rest of the year. [That concern did not belong to any church, but was keen on advertising among vain fashion devotees]. In committee-of-the-whole, the school (Bible school, do not forget) got busy planning the next dramatic entertainment, in which great success was anticipated, bringing much credit to the school and greatly stimulating response on the approaching Decision Day. Finally, the young popular pastor, Rev. Doctor Cloth, D.D., Litt.D., Ph.D., LL.D., arose in his dignity and said that he was pleased to say to the young people preparing the big debate on The Relativity and Fourth Dimension of Evolution that he would hear the final rehearsal at their convenience (they are boss now). The Bible School is too busy to attend to spiritual studies. Moses? Well?

#### MOSES, THE MEEK

Meanwhile, where was Moses? Moses? Who's he? Oh Moses; the little chap who had some bulrushes! He was just tucked away in a dark corner of the brain until review day would bring him out for mere mention. But

there is something of great special importance and significance about Moses that the Sunday school failed to consider. Why was Moses chosen to lead Israel out of Egypt? Moses' early life was important and interesting yet only incidental. The big thing, of universal bearing, is the quality of his mind and heart that fitted him for divine fellowship in the great work of a nation's emancipation. The same condition is now, and always will be, a factor of any program in the working out of the world's redemption. That work would proceed much faster if more men of Moses' character were to be had for it. But when nearly all training in home, school, Sunday school, and on the street, combines to develop just the opposite quality nothing is to be expected but thriving wickedness. The peep we just took at "Bible school" methods shows how utterly indisposed and incompetent are most religious teachers for real Christian instruction. It surely would be quite an exhibition of inconsistency (some might say hypocrisy) for a school that emphasizes pride, show, strife and vainglory to try to teach meekness. The conspicuous thing with Moses was meekness. Living in the king's palace as adopted son of a princess, he had all the luxuries and opportunities of such a position. He was thoroughly educated in the great schools of Egypt, so that he was learned in all the wisdom of that noted people. Outside records state that he was at the head of the great national university, and had general oversight of the large body of Egyptian priests. Yet, with all this, Moses was rated the meekest man on earth (Num. 12:3). Because of his meekness he was attentive to the voice of God, and responsive to guidance in the work to which called. Lack of meekness keeps most men from attending to the real word of God, and so from doing important works very much needed. God cannot use the proud and self-willed.



How many church members, even, do now what an ancient prophet urged—seek meekness (Zeph. 2:3)? If any pray for it, are they sincere? Do they show any appreciation of meekness and faith that God will give it to them by starting to act meekly? Some good things are bestowed only as we show real interest and faith by starting in the direction indicated. "As they went they were healed." I know a religious man who always (in church prayer-meetings) prays that all present may be humble. But when he built a new house (in the small village where nobody could hide) he put his name conspicuously over the front entrance! And, with much labor and expense, he compiled a large book of family geneology. Instead of studying Scripture beyond the interest of his sect, he spent much time playing checkers. Did he care for meekness beyond a pious sentiment? When we sincerely seek meekness (or any virtue), even standing at the door knocking, and begin to practice it, we find it, with the real satisfaction it brings. Pride perturbs; meekness mollifies. "Blessed are the meek."

### MEEKNESS OF WISDOM

These words of Scripture are well worth considering:

Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good behaviour his works with meekness of wisdom. . . . But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle.—James 3:13-17.

The meek will he guide in judgment: the meek will he teach his way.—Ps. 25:9.

The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great value.—1 Peter 3:4.

Thrills? Who could wish for better than these simple words give? To see right into the mind of God—to be thus admitted to one of the secret elements of Eternal Omniscience and Omnipotence—is glory beyond all language to tell. To know what these words say is worth

more than all schools can offer; for what God plainly commends expresses, or reveals, himself, and to know him is life eternal. Better be foolish in the meekness of God's wisdom than be wise in the pride of man's folly. This item of meekness, alone, so contrary to the world's ways, is ample refutation of the modern infidelity that asserts the compilation of the Bible from fragments of pagan literature and folklore.

The history of Moses and other meek heroes proves that meekness is not cowardice. It is not timidity or weakness. On the contrary, meekness has the courage and strength of self-restraint and self-control. Worldly wisdom sees manliness in contending for rights, in resentment and retaliation. The wisdom from above sees beneath the surface that divine bravery that can wait for spiritual adjustments that eventually save both the wronged and the wronger—double victory. "He who rules his own soul is better than he who takes a city." Melting an enemy down by kindness is better than to tear him up with dynamite. Turning the other cheek cheats the gallows and makes a hero with one motion. Jesus could have called an army of angels to his help—and so would have failed in his mission. He humbled himself unto a cross—so conquered the world, the Devil and hell. He had all power at his call, yet was so meek that he rode on a common beast of burden when the crowd would make him king. Anticipating a bit, we note that the chief man of a great nation today rides to his throne in the same kind of a car that many working men use. Some meekness is still appreciated. But the meekness of the Master did not weaken his voice against dishonesty, oppression, hypocrisy and superstition. He whipped profaners and cheats out of the temple, and trimmed no words in denouncing Scribes and Pharisees to their very ears. Meekness and real red blood can mix.



Meekness is an expression of a true recognition of the essential relations of all beings. It does not contradict self-respect, but restrains it from the exaggerations of egotism. It acknowledges the supremacy of God, the equality and possible superiority of other men, and the liability of self to error in understanding or impulse. It may, as a fruit of the Spirit (while envy and strife are of the flesh), be regarded as a regulator of thought and conduct, restraining from extravagance in attitude and undue boldness in action. The meek consider before they speak or act. They "watch their step" and "look before they leap". Meekness has been called a sign of spiritual health. "It co-ordinates and regulates all the faculties of soul and body." (*Gwylm*). Restraint is an expression of sanity and strength, not of weakness. The meek do not assert themselves, but restrain impulse to the direction of discretion. So they escape confusion and contention. This is a phase of the "meekness of wisdom" noted above—the divine wisdom.

#### VOLUNTARY HUMILITY

Humility and meekness are divine attributes essential to perfection or completeness, but they do not supplant self-respect. Self-respect is just while pride is exaggeration. Best things perverted become worst things. So humility and meekness are burlesqued into grotesque superstition, and that especially by those who are too smart to be truly humble and meek. Unbelief of truth results in credulity of falsehood. Numerous cults now thrive on the stubborn and stupid refusal of people to accept the plain gospel of the Son of God—the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. To treat of these would fill volumes; for the serpent's voice has many inflections. We may only refer to a special perversion called "will-worship" or "voluntary humility and worshipping

of angels" by the apostle in Col. 2:18-23. Paul warned against incipient Gnosticism which later developed into a very mischievous enemy of the church and is rampant now in various modified forms, of which Theosophy is conspicuous. [See my book "Modern Theosophy"]. An offshoot of Gnosticism was Docetism, now revived in "Christian Science" which is antichrist in denying the incarnation (1 John 4:1-3 and 2 John 7-11). One of the fundamental propositions of these heresies is the inherent evil of matter. The incarnation rebukes that superstition, so is denied. The ancient heretics sought piety and virtue by asceticism (often more theoretical and ideal than practical and real), while the modern school (Eddyites) claim victory by simply denying the reality of matter—unless wearing the dollar-sign! If matter is not matter, then it does not matter what is done with matter; so no matter what one does with matter it is only a matter of delusion, not sin. Such was the vile effect of ancient Gnosticism and Docetism that pagans were scandalized and the church had to take vigorous action to suppress them. The heresies tried to appear as higher developments of Christianity, so pushed into the churches. Paul's warning put Christians on guard where received sincerely. The scheme was of diabolical invention to destroy the church and her testimony. All details of the origin and propagation of so-called Christian Science prove it to be but a revival of the ancient diabolism. Its "science" is the mock philosophy that Paul dubbed "science falsely so called"—not what we mean by science but the peculiar *gnosis* (Greek) that pretended a superior occult knowledge of mysteries, like theosophic esoterism or the Eddyite illumination.

This attitude toward matter is a voluntary (uncalled for, gratuitous, surplus) humility that eventually takes the form of worshipping angels, in which superiority is



claimed for the disembodied state and effort is made to live therein by special mental processes, yogic practices or communications with spirits (supposedly of the dead) or by direct visions. But Scripture contradicts all such things. We are to live in this physical world, but hold it in subjection. Disembodiment is not the goal, but a better embodiment. Faith, not visions or voices, is our sufficient incentive and guide. We are not told to afflict the body literally, but to mortify the *deeds* of the body by keeping it under control. Going beyond what has been written by revelation and sealed in heaven is disastrous in doctrine and practice. Whoever goes over into unscriptural doctrines has neither Christ nor God is the plain statement of 2 John 9, where "transgress" does not mean sin in the usual sense, but to step over the prescribed lines of doctrine. Such cults as Mormonism and Eddyism that insolently use the name of Christ to mislead and ensnare are diabolical vipers of lowest hell. Prying into things not revealed leads to destructive delusions, of which Spiritism is conspicuous and most other cults only its variations. Many who are too conceited to accept and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ fall into the snare of mediums. Refusing or failing to humble themselves before God and seeking his will in his word, they, in voluntary humility, run to the mediums for guidance in most trifling matters. Many uninstructed Christians stumble into a mistaken piety in seeking signs to indicate God's will in even trivial details. And more misuse prayer as a means for getting supernatural interference where Scripture says to use discretion, benevolence and simple affection. Results often disappoint and sometimes are disastrous. True meekness does not make us mere puppets to be moved as the strings are pulled. Getting the mind of Christ, we are not "possessed" for "control" as with mediums

and other victims of demons, but have liberty of voluntary action as sons of God. Worship of angels is now practiced in a way by the Romish adoration of saints and the once virgin Mary, and by servility to priests, as intermediaries with God—a perverted meekness. The carnal mind can not appreciate the spiritual, and even resents it, preferring the counterfeit meekness of self-inflicted humiliations—which God repudiates.

#### ARISTOCRACY EXCLUDED

The Anglo-Saxon word from which our "meek" came was *meca*, meaning "companion" or "equal". In that sense, also, the meek are commendable. Not stuck-up or puffed-up; not conceited or self-important; not touchy or quarrelsome; not snobbish or haughty; but ready to associate with any in every station; patient under provocation, melting and winning with kindness those who do us wrong—an ideal condition, but a possible and a practical one that receives reward right here on earth; "for they shall inherit the earth." They have a right to it, the sure right of inheritance. Equality and fraternity *versus* aristocracy and snobbery reads part of the meaning of meekness. Virginia needs to repent much before she can receive the commendation "Blessed are the meek"; for the sky of Virginia is all stuck up with the vain labels "F.F.V.", a special way of spelling social pride. The meek do not strut nor crow; nor stick up the nose. Gobblers, peacocks and roosters do not belong to the meek fraternity. Pictures of crowing roosters announcing political victory do not express meekness. They speak of pride in having beaten the other party—glorying in success at the cost of the downfall or humiliation of fellowmen. The Kingdom of Heaven has no use for politics. Politicians are not in that kingdom; for ambition, party-spirit, rivalry, are contrary to the



Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of unity, fellowship and mutuality, as well as of integrity. Politics knows no integrity. A prominent politician told me that it is not possible for any man to be honest while in politics. A man may start with good intentions, but soon finds it necessary to use the tricks of the game or quit. Most men who start gradually get hardened and continue in the fascination. No politician is a true Christian.

The meek do not even "stand up for their rights", but suffer oppression and persecution without resentment or defense, letting God take care of the outcome of every situation. The meek do not carry carnal weapons at all. Preachers who carry guns, or have them at their desks or about the house, belie their profession. A notorious "Fundamentalist" preacher who killed the mayor of his city in his own professedly peaceful "sanctum" denied his pretension of loyalty to Scripture by having a gun at his command. His violence was but a logical result of such preparedness. No man has a gun unless, down in his heart, he expects to use it—and (maybe unconsciously) hopes, wants, intends to use it whenever there is provocation, opportunity, excuse. Civil powers said that preacher was not guilty of murder, but God says he was a transgressor. Such things encourage gun-play and all it involves. That preacher should have been let out of his pulpit at once, but his flock was too stupid and flocked the more to hear his tirades against people who do not hold his opinions—but honor the Lord who says not to avenge ourselves and to avoid even wrath against enemies. But some say that Jesus commanded his disciples to protect themselves with weapons, so we are to be equipped and alert. For this they quote "He that has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one" (Luke 22:36). But they read through the Devil's eyes, seeing only what is wanted to endorse a special

proposition. But the only safe and sane way to truth is to consider the "also written". Scripture is its own best interpreter in some things, and is perfectly plain in the item we have in hand. In the next verse Jesus explained what he meant by telling his disciples to buy swords at the time of his betrayal and approaching trial. "For" is a little word, but it introduces reasons that must be known, sometimes, for safe interpretation. Jesus did not at all mean for the swords to be used in his defense. When Peter did use one, Jesus rebuked him, healed the wound and said that those who use weapons will perish by them (Matt. 26:52). "For"—Jesus was to be numbered among transgressors, as prophecy had stated. So contrary to God is even the carrying of weapons, that Jesus was classed as a lawbreaker for being in company with men who had swords, only two being sufficient to meet the situation. Any preacher or layman who now has a gun violates an important principle of true Christianity. He disputes God's promise to adjust all things to the satisfaction and happiness of all who trust him. Meekness does not repudiate God's care. When the church allied herself with the world she lost her Christian character, becoming a spiritual harlot to cast away her spiritual graces and be clothed in the showy togs of worldly manners. Any true church would bear witness against the evil of violence, and would discipline members for gun-toting, a common practice in some sections of our country. The Beatitudes are hardly recognized now except as nice sayings of a visionary in ancient literature not applicable in our complex practical progressive age. But eternal principles apply in all ages. The only fault is in human perversity. Repentance is the great need today. The church must throw off the unclean alliances and be purified to receive her Lord who properly demands loyalty to him and his word.



The meek are too great to be troubled about little things. They do not stoop to retaliate, but endure in patience, and even in pity for their foolish provokers and insulters. They regard the spiritual adjustments so as to rejoice in tribulation. Impatient and quarrelsome people are not meek and are always in trouble, inciting enmity and resentment. Their pride often causes them to lose time and money in lawsuits, to the hindrance of their own prosperity. The meek miss all such trouble.

### INHERITING THE EARTH

The announcement of Christ that the meek will inherit the earth was an ax at the roots of much social and political custom—a complete change in the prevailing attitudes not only in those days but also now. Jews thought they were to inherit the earth because of their descent from Abraham and their special standing in the Mosaic dispensation. Of this they were proud, and in it were conceited. Meekness was quite outside of their recognized accomplishments and interests. No thought of meekness was associated with Messiah, but quite the opposite notwithstanding the prophecy in Zech. 9:9. In our land of social equality (a phase of meekness) some failure appears right at headquarters—when quarrels arise about who shall sit where at official-social tables. The meek do not carry chips on the shoulder, nor align themselves for defense or offense, thus saving the worry of watchfulness and the wear of suspicion, so tending to peace, health and long life. The meek life is the easy and simple one. "For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest to your souls." What is highly esteemed among men may be abomination with God, and what God values men often despise—so contrary are their attitudes. Men think meekness a shameful weakness; God thinks it an honorable power. He even

values it as an ornament. Adornments are to make more attractive. Who but God would think that meekness makes persons more beautiful? But it beats jewels and laces and rouge and lipsticks altogether.

Whose decoration, let it not be the external one of braiding (or waving) the hair and wearing gold trinkets or putting on raiment, but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible ornament—the meek and quiet spirit which is very valuable in God's presence (view).—1 Peter 3:3,4.

Perfect personality (character) is what pleases and satisfies God, and meekness, real manliness, is an important element—needed in the restoration of man to the image of his Creator. In Christ only are we completed.

The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.—Psalm 37:11.

Meekness was mentioned by prophets, but Jewish conceit was too stubborn to notice it. Delighting in abundance was their carnal interpretation of destiny, while overlooking the spiritual nature of the riches. Just so do ignorant carnal religious folk now work up a noisy ecstasy by singing of the golden streets and crowns, the white robes and luscious fruit of the trees beside the crystal stream in heaven, while oblivious of the meaning of salvation as deliverance from present sin both in purpose and action. Christendom boasts of achievements in all phases of worldly interests while disdaining the really vital elements—the essential principles of immortality, the divine life described in the Beatitudes.

Meekness is not rebellious, nor violent in any agitation. It is no striker or brawler. It makes no fights for rights or recognition. It makes no campaigns or drives to get attention or force a "cause". Not being a beast, it uses no hoofs or horns to push a propaganda. It has no label, nor threatens those who do not cringe to its programs or demands. It makes no parades to show its strength and secure respect—or fear. And yet the meek



will inherit the earth. How? Just as Jesus Christ did—by letting the Father dispose of the matter. Jesus incited no riotous revolution, as some false Christs did. He submitted to death rather than defend himself or his cause with force. But God raised him from the dead and gave him the earth for a possession, besides honor and power in heaven. And the earth is to come completely under his dominion. Those who have fellowship with Christ in meekness will sit with him on his throne. God will take care of that. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he will bring it to pass." Those who refuse to accept the program of meekness get what they can (only a trifle) by attack or resistance and in the end lose everything. By remitting his rights in heaven and meekly taking up the program of redemption through suffering, Christ was made King of kings and Lord of lords at his Father's throne. Development of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth is much hindered by failure of men to live in Christian meekness. To the carnal man the tameness of meekness looks like losing life. But he who loses carnal life in faithful following of the meek and lowly Jesus finds spiritual life that lasts forever. Losing self to find God is wise bravery.

The meek will inherit the earth. Being partakers of immortality—the Blessed—they will inherit habitations on the new earth wherein dwells righteousness. In some degree it is true here and now. Meekness is a phase of godliness, and "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." The meek avoid feuds, keep away from disturbances, live quietly and largely in retirement; they keep from litigations, so saving expense, trouble, loss of time, and wearing worry; and even escape possible violence. Such peaceableness tends to health and longevity. So the meek outlive their troublous neighbors

and hold the land (which the Greek word in the text properly means) in restful security. In another sense, also, it might be said that the meek inherit the earth—in the perpetual, respectful and grateful memory of succeeding generations. Some (who have no consciousness of real immortality) say that this is all there is to immortality. But, while God's word approves memorials, it does not imply immortality by them. Immortality is infinitely more. It is God's life, which is not a mere memorial. Immortal meekness is worth having.

Comment on this beatitude in *The New Century Bible* (valuable for students able to discriminate) reads:

The ambitious and tyrannical have possessed the earth, but their day is short. The moral code of the lowly Galilean is the foundation of civilized legislation. Dr. Bruce refers to the inheritance of the Western continent which has come to the descendants of the persecuted Puritans.

With some reservation and modification, this well-meant tribute to meekness suggests more than may be dealt with here. Puritans were less conspicuous for meekness than for some less commendable qualities. Western democracy is better in some respects than eastern tyranny, yet it only spreads pride of power from individuals to masses that move as demagogues dictate. The real democracy of the early church had the meekness of the Divine Life within, so was safe. But a democracy of the rabble is one of discord and disaster. Meek as America is, compared with some countries, she needs caution and correction. Wars will not make the world safe for democracy, but only the inner power unto live righteousness that makes individuals kings along with God in the Kingdom of Heaven. Then can and will be done the perfect mind of God on earth as in heaven.

"Blessed are the meek; for they will inherit the earth."



## THE HUNGRY AND THIRSTY

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*Blessed are they which hunger and thirst  
after righteousness; for they shall be filled.*

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HUNGER and thirst—natural impulses to supply bodily needs; strong desire, eagerness, uneasiness for both food and drink as nourishment to sustain life. Not cravings for unnatural satisfaction or pleasure (which is lust, not natural appetite); not itch to tickle taste, to please palate or satisfy whims or fads; not desire for delicacies that never satisfy but incite excess—these are not rational hunger and thirst. “Whose god (supreme interest) is their belly” describes an idolatry much too common. Some ancient Romans indulged their mad appetite in a singularly silly and stupid way. They built pits or vats at a side of banquet halls, called vomitories. Gluttons ate and drank until full, then took an emetic and went over and puked into the vomitories what they had just swallowed. Returning to the tables, they repeated the gorging, even using stimulants to excite appetite! Pigs are refined in comparison—in contrast, rather. Living to eat: some to smoke!! End? Harvest of corruption.

Did somebody say “Appetizers”? Preparations are now sold bearing such title. Domestic departments of periodicals give much advice about preparing foods so as to incite and tickle appetite. Taste is made a chief consideration. Normal eating needs no excitation. Nature’s remedy for some ailments is disrelish for food, to incite fasting. When animals are ill they fast. Appetite returns with recovery. Doctors who prescribe delicate

foods to tempt the sick to eat when not caring for food (if such still practice) are at fault. Perversion of appetite should be corrected by deliberate reformation in selection of foods. Following fads has no virtue. Crowd psychology does for sheep, but men are responsible for individual action. "Whosoever will, let him", "let every soul", "follow thou" are the requirements in moral and spiritual spheres. Courage is needed to do right. Not weakness but wantonness hinders correction of indulgence; for help is given those who want to do right, as stated in this beatitude. Subjecting the higher nature to mere physical feeling or taste is folly and sin, yet it is the conspicuous characteristic of this age of bragging culture in higher education and religious development. The too obvious fact is that most people do not care for the spiritual, but want to indulge their physical impulses in disregard of the inescapable law that sowing to the flesh reaps corruption. If schools would teach this law instead of athletics they would act wisely. The carnal mind is hostile to the spiritual—toward God—and must be subjected, even crucified. No fun in crucifixion is there? How are men to have courage to kill their own carnal inclinations when taught from cradle to college "commencement" that sport is the big thing? This is not saying that the physical body is contrary to God—he made it and called it good. Mischievous asceticism follows contempt for the physical. Not the physical body but the fleshly mind (not created by God) is to be crucified. Man made it and he must kill it—must put it in subjection to the spiritual mind. For those who do this now the resurrection-body will be so changed that the carnal consciousness will be gone. It is insult to God and to his Spirit in us, to let the physical dominate the spiritual. When carnal impulse (lust) controls it drowns the soul in perdition. Open eyes see the great



mischievous and disaster of current emphasis on tickling the taste in everything, whether food or drink; clothing or literature; pastimes or even religion—"beautifying the service". Freak appetites and passions are being invented and stimulated by modern "culture" the end of which is too horrible for description—just hell.

Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of man will give unto you.—John 6:27.

God's advice is not only neglected but is spurned by the multitudes. People perish because they will not, not because they can not, heed the gospel of salvation. If a man falls out of a boat and a competent rescuer plunges after him, he is not drowned because of the fall, but by resisting the deliverer. Souls perish because refusing the deliverance Christ offers, not because of specific sins.

So nobody is compelled to be righteous, but if he has appreciation in that direction; if he really desires, hunger and thirsts for righteousness, God will satisfy him fully and freely. No fees are exacted in any process of genuine Christianity. All priestcraft, with its fees and bargain-piety, is humbug and delusion without exception. "Shall be filled". Filling is a gradual process, not a magic flooding. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear" is the Lord's plain description of the development of spiritual life; for unity of principle pervades both physical and spiritual kingdoms, or realms—"natural law in the spiritual world". We "grow in grace" however much we hunger and thirst—we are not perfected instantaneously. The doctrine of instantaneous perfection as a "second blessing" has done not a little mischief. It is a delusion whose source is signified by the spiritual pride common among its professors and their peculiar perversions of Scripture. The usual word "perfect" (*teleios* in Greek), in the New Testament,

does not mean flawless but mature, developed, as the result of processes excluding any notion of magic. One who hungers and thirsts after righteousness needs to be patient while gradually developing in that quality (not heeding accusing thoughts) until his whole trend and delight are in the way of right. Righteousness becomes a voluntary pleasure in great contrast to the old way of doing wrong. When a sinner is converted he becomes interested in and eager for what is right. He desires or hungers for righteousness as a quality of heart, and is assured of complete success—to be filled.

We are told that, when the people of Berea heard the gospel, they were so interested and eager to know all about it that they searched the Scriptures daily for full evidence and explanation. They did not just piously read by rubrics but really investigated—asked, sought, knocked. Rubrical reading of Scripture may satisfy a superstitious piety without informing the understanding so as to enable one to give a reason for the inner hope he professes. If all would join the real Berean Bible Class the confusion of Christendom would disappear as fogs in summer sunlight. Those who genuinely hunger and thirst after righteousness do diligently search the word of God for full information as to what constitutes righteousness, and how to practice it. If not interested enough to do so, profession of appetite for truth is just more humbug. One who hungers for bread or thirsts for wine will eat and drink what is set before him. The word of God is placed before us—the word that is spirit and life—and it is up to us to nourish our souls with it.

#### FREAK EATING

"Bread and games; bread and games" was the only care and the noisy cry of ancient Romans during a critical period of their history. Such is becoming a conspicuous



and significant situation among modern Americans who are reproducing, in principle and somewhat in expression, the conditions of old pagan Rome. What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we wear (if anything at all)? What shall we smoke? What shall we play? Where shall we go? What car shall we use? What shall we see? These are the big questions of the day! Proof? Every newspaper, billboard, shop window and radio chorus of ads., ads., ads. and ads. Living like animals (the carnal life) without their integrity, most people take no interest in the spiritual. Carnal-mindedness is death. To live in pleasure, is to be dead while living, says Scripture—contradicting those who teach that death is extinction.

For a big sample of ornate silliness we may look at the Golden House of Emperor Nero. Among its extravagances were the peculiar ceilings of the banquet halls carved, painted and gilded in such a way that arrangement and color effects could be changed to fit different courses of a meal—so artistic in delightful harmony!! As was Rome, so are England and America becoming today. Harmony, artistic harmony, is a fad of the hour—as a mere lust of the eyes. A recent news item read:

London men striving for the perfect in apparel now wear clothes to match their dogs.

Oh what struggling strivings do fashion-heroes perform in almost martyr-zeal! Who will raise monuments of glory to such devotion to perfection? "Men" the item reads. But such are not men—they are only other dogs standing up but degenerate beside those whose colors they ape. It is like a chapter from Pliny who, in writing of society in his time, asked "Who is even a man?" A like condition appears here in the stress put on delicacy, attractiveness, novelty, flavor, color and showiness generally. It would seem that the end of silliness is reached

(forgetting those English dog-apes) in recent schemes for coloring pale fruits (like pears) before serving and for coloring ice to match kitchen decorations and color notes at table!! Teachers of so-called domestic-science classes in schools stress the preparation of pastries and other unwholesome stuff (not fit to be called food), and have exhibitions of the work to show how smart the new highly-educated housekeepers are going to be!! A double violation of the first laws of spiritual life is no commendation of this phase of popular education. A school matron recently commented on eating by college students, saying that the old style of contentment with plain and simple foods (true to nature) has given way to a nervous (or naughty) appetite for tidbits of what she called "jazzy foods", described as "sandwiches, salads and other things all fixed up pretty, with a lot of little dabs of things". A newspaper reporter of this item commented: "Culinary jaz has joined the saxophone!" College students got their start in public schools and largely in professedly Christian homes. But what can be expected from flapper teachers and mothers? Not a thing of the spiritual or even sensible. Themselves false to God and to their own instinctive promptings in servile obedience to unclean fashion-dictators, they can not pass on what they have not—integrity of character.

#### PERVADING PRINCIPLES

Such things may seem like trifles in a serious discussion but they are not; for they are ominous. Straws show how wind blows; little rudders guide great ships; tiny tongues turn trouble and determine destinies; a word made the world. "*Ex uno disce omnes*" said a Roman sage—"from one learn all." A pretty woman began to talk—the first half-sentence spoiled the attraction. A noted man said five wanton words that showed him up



for what he was. Cigarette suckers of either sex are not dependable in the worth-while things. Freak eating, freak dressing and freak talking show freak thinking and freak willing—contrary to the wisdom from above.

As all our life is a unity, principles are universal. An attitude in one sphere is the same in all spheres. So if our appetite in the material sphere is for poor and unworthy things, it will be the same in the intellectual and moral spheres. Those whose tastes are for beer, cake, candy, cigarettes, coca-cola, tobacco, whiskey, will have like ignoble tastes for intellectual things (if any at all)—for fiction, drama, movies, and other froth. Socially they will be interested in cards, coarse parties, dances, shows, suppers, theatres, and other entertainments. If they give any attention to religion, it will be to showy ritualism, noisy emotionalism, or psychic delusions and humbugs. They do not relish the higher intellectual things; much less the spiritual. Before such can begin to approach the Kingdom of Heaven they must repent—change their minds, their attitudes. They must cease folly and turn toward righteousness. Then God will help them. Until then he can not help, for they would not receive. Only the hungry appreciate enough to eat.

Unity of principle in different spheres was shown in Christ's statement that what is bound on earth is also bound in heaven, and what is loosed on earth is loosed in heaven; so the importance of clearing up all our relations with men as well as with God right now is plain. Our attitudes toward men are also our attitudes toward God. Our conduct toward men is also our conduct toward God. If we trifle among men, we trifle with God. "Unto one of the least of these, unto me." Morality is an essential expression of true religion. Piety that fails to make us behave in things of this world is only a humbug before heaven. "He who is faithful in the

least is faithful in much." Not size but quality is God's measure of value. "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" makes our comments here pertinent. Whatever attitude is taken in one phase of life is maintained through all. We cannot love and hate the same object. We cannot be honest in one sphere and deceitful in another. We cannot be truly pious in church on Sunday and deal dishonestly in shop or office on Monday. We cannot serve God and mammon. We cannot live for the spiritual while living for the carnal. If we live to eat, we court damnation; for God will destroy both the belly and its foods. Then what of the souls that have no higher interests? If we want eternal life, we must live in the spiritual realm now, which involves subjection of bodily impulses to the higher nature. We cannot be loyal in one sphere and traitorous in another. We can not be in harmony with God and at enmity with man. We cannot become reconciled with God until we clean up our relations with men. We cannot relish refinements while lusting for filth. A dog has no use for holy things, nor a hog for pearls. We cannot aim at a star while looking at a puddle. We cannot aspire for the noble while cherishing the mean and frivolous. We cannot develop a generation of intellectual, moral, spiritual, holy and godly people by present prevalent posing of monkey culture as education. We must repent (change our attitudes) and hunger (aspire) for what is worthy and right before we can realize the really true, beautiful and good.

#### PROPER PRAYING

As not all hunger and thirst are commendable, so not all prayer is proper. Some say that wishes are prayers. In the serious sense this is true, but mere wishes in the common use of the word, have not the earnest origin



or spiritual purpose to make them prayers. Wishes may be hunger for mere carnal gratification, so not to be considered prayers. "You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss (wickedly, reads the Greek) that you may consume (waste) it upon your lusts" says James. Many who pray for *things* and do not get them forget these words. Life does not consist of things or need many things. Many things are a nuisance and bother, as Jesus told Martha. Only one thing is needful. In the model prayer (called the Lord's Prayer) is only one request for things—for a day's ration of food. Not a word is there about superfluities or luxuries. Of course, the Kingdom Postponers repudiate this prayer, and pray for such luxuries as they think due from Heaven. Did not their leader, after years of false propaganda and putting out a Bible annotated with rank falsehoods, (we are reading in daylight, remember) tell the Lord about his long hard service, entitling him to an easy retirement, and suggesting that a good auto-car would be a proper and acceptable thing? And, brother James, he got the machine! But he probably talked over a party line with a loyal follower listening in. Irreverent? No more than was Jesus when he whipped the scalawags out of the temple and called them hard names, or the apostles in dealing with deceiving teachers.

Real prayer is a call of the heart for spiritual good, a call for God, himself, as in the Lord's Prayer. Life eternal is our true interest, and our praying should be an expression of heart-hunger for God. No one knows what real prayer is until he says with the Psalmist:

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all needful and proper things will come incidentally. When the spiritual nature becomes alive in God all our

faculties are quickened so that the making of a living is a mere incident. What profit in prayer? Not the mere getting of things, though that is the common notion, but the fellowship with God. The best and most satisfying answer is in God's words to Abram: "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward" (Gen. 15:1). To realize this is more than mines of diamonds and gold. Having God is having all.

#### IDOLATRY OF IDEALS

Today the psychical is largely substituted for the spiritual, and righteousness is regarded to be what one's own ideals suggest. Self is supreme. God is only an assistant to come at one's bidding and help work out his own purposes! Yes, indeed; I actually heard a young Presbyterian pastor (fresh from theological school) climax his pastoral prayer with an invitation to God to come down and help the members of his flock to realize their ideals. He neglected to report to the congregation what had become of Divine Sovereignty. The big modern interest is self-satisfaction in the pursuit of self-indulgence as the refinement of self-expression. Self, and self only, is supreme—so delightfully hog-like! Sensations, thrills, surprises to imagination, trifling amusements or tickling the taste, are the ideals that people hunger and thirst for in stupid disregard of the inescapable law that sowing to the flesh reaps corruption. Culture of the carnal is the big program everywhere. Ideals are mere mental images having no reality. To worship them is as really idolatry as is bowing to material images. This is an idolatrous generation. Hunger and thirst for spiritual satisfaction are just as normal as for bodily supplies. Any absence of them is due to a perversion of instinct—depravity. The hunger and thirst that Jesus commended are specifically limited to eager aspirations



for righteousness. Chasers after ideals need to repent before they can begin to be Christians. To ask God to come down and help people realize their ideals, is more insolent than is frank atheism. If God is at all, he is supreme, and it is for us to conform ourselves to him, not to try to subordinate him to our fancies. Theological schools that turn out such crass stupids as to make God secondary to human ideals are only farces.

#### MENTAL INTOXICATION

Intellectual appetite may be perverted and misdirected even more disastrously than the physical. For most part it is misdirected everywhere. Fiction, fairy stories, dramas—slop—constitute much of current literature. The call, the appetite, is for such reading, and many are eager to supply it. A glance at any news-stand shows the low popular taste in literature. "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" applies, in principle, to the lusts of the carnal mind, which is hostile to God. What saving of big expense would this be to individuals, families and institutions; for the "cost of living" is largely in these provisions. Mental intoxication is a disgrace to beings made in the image of God who is perfect poise. Intoxicated surely are minds that gulp popular frothy fermented literature and the trash that makes up much of what poses as educational pabulum. Sensible, sober and useful thinking is rare. Froth is showy, but worthless. "Whatever things are true, whatever honorable, whatever just, whatever pure, whatever lovely, whatever reputable (high-toned)—in short, if anything you find is good and worthy, apply your minds to these things" is Paul's advice for intellectual activity. This does not restrict reading or mental action to strictly religious lines, but does exclude the trivial, fanciful and useless. Since Christ reconciled the

world unto God all things present and future are sacred which do not, in essential principle, oppose the mind of God. Our findings in this study check with this proposition, so objections are directed against what is wrong in spirit, not what merely displeases some opinions. It is a fact, not an opinion, that high-class spiritual literature has small sale, there being little appetite for it. Professedly Christian people are numerous enough that, if consistent, their patronage of publishers would soon purify the literary output, making it unprofitable to issue the unworthy, if no better motive actuates. So in other directions, also, we should boycott the unworthy.

Sentimental hunger and thirst are not spiritual. A stupid perversion prevails, that sentiment and imagination are spiritual elements and forces. They are not such, but only psychical. Taste for sentimental literature or sentimental religion [Superstitious heathen are often sentimental] does not mark the high-minded or truly intellectual, much less the spiritual. Sentimentalism is animal impulse, not partaking of the immortal spirit. Most so-called evangelistic, or revival, work is of sentimental order using mob psychology (a mere trick) to excite impulsive response of transient nature, not reaching spiritual result—which explains the common failure of such "campaigns". Feelings cool; interest dies.

#### THE DRAMA

Much might be said of wrong intellectual hunger, but our present object does not call for full discussion. An item contrary to different Beatitudes needs some comment because so little understood in its spiritual bearings. Dramas and other theatricals, with "movies", are greedily sought after by an abnormal appetite especially fostered by educational agencies, including schools and Sunday schools. Any real hunger for righteousness



excludes these; for their origin and practice are both contrary to righteousness. The drama originated as a phase of pagan mystery-religion, and its practice is in the line of pretense and trifling with the really sacred.

This is not the place for full discussion of the drama but only to note it as one of the popular expressions of the world-mind in contradiction to the spiritual. The dramatic appeal, at best, is only psychical. Before his conversion, Augustine was a devotee of the theatre. He afterwards denounced it very emphatically. To the defense that plays sometimes teach good lessons, he replied that any influence for good is a psychical delusion of a moment. Emotions may thrill for a little, but are soon forgotten. Nowhere does Scripture endorse emotional appeal or prompting, but repudiates it. Affection is commonly regarded an emotion, but incorrectly; for affection expresses deliberate voluntary attitude, while emotion is excited impulse that drives, especially a contagion in a crowd. Affection is spiritual; emotion, only psychical. I emphasize this because of the disastrous mischief now rampant in the substitution of the psychic for the spiritual, as Scripture forewarned. Impulses to good, when unheeded, are transformed unto hardening effect. Those who weep at a show of tenderness, kindness or pathos on the stage know that it is only play, show, pretense, sham, without appeal to conscience, so receive no regenerating benefit. With dried eyes and harder hearts the spectators go from the theater worse than when they entered, not to mention effects from laughing looks at vulgar, profane and distorted comedy worked in. So the best attempted defense of drama is a boomerang unto condemnation. Hunger and thirst for drama express shallowness of mind that will not do direct thinking because it requires application, attention and serious attitude. Dream-drifting is the common

state of mind, waiting for whatever nudge comes along to suggest action—bridle and bit and "giddap". Stage play helps to diversify the mental drift, and the thrill of broken monotony is like candy to a child. "But when I became a man I put away childish things." Further attention will be given the drama later in our study.

#### CHARACTER-BUILDING

A well-known writer said, in a recent article, that not one in five of our college students has any real passion for learning, and that a like small percentage would cover all who are eager enough to complete a course, if necessary to work their way and sacrifice to do it. To indulge carnal impulses is preferred. He adds:

Most of them go to college because it is the orthodox thing to do; because a college degree is a social advantage; because their parents require them to go, or because college life is more pleasant than the alternative they are offered.

He protested so vigorously as to say that final diplomas are hardly more than papers of dismissal of rubbish. Many students have no interest in study, no wish to understand, no aim to improve, no aspiration for worthy things as such. There is no wish TO BE, but merely to get, have and enjoy. They are counted as students, but are not—except as they study how to "pass" without study! Their hunger and thirst do not go beyond the primal animal impulse to exist and enjoy—a disgrace even to the evolution fancy, which concedes a trend to improve! What waste of money and labor, to pretend to educate what God terms dogs and hogs, wanting only low things—who appreciate and esteem cigarettes more than the wisdom of God! Education without a spiritual basis and direction is worse than a humbug.

Character-building is distinctly a matter of direction in hunger and thirst—real innermost aspirations. The



materials used depend on the appreciations, not on the acquirements. God works with our aspirations, not our acquirements—our materials, our lumber. He can build a most beautiful character (an immortal personality) out of a plain, obscure, unlettered soul that just longs for righteousness, truth, holiness, goodness—all godliness—when he can do nothing with one that fills a page in "Who's Who" and relishes just things. Our learning is not needed—it may be largely fiction; for we know only in part (fragmentarily), and constantly discover that what we knew yesterday (especially in science) was largely guess. Spiritual attitudes are of the eternal, but carnal lusts indulged work shame and destruction in us. To follow Christ, we must deny ourselves, (*versus* the self-expression religion), and take up the cross. The strange possibilities of superstition among people who have not spiritual comprehension are well shown in the action of those literalists who think they "take up the cross" by wearing a miniature cross on the body. Real cross-bearing (aside from actual martyrdom) is made plain in Heb. 12:4—"You have not resisted unto blood in striving against sin." The reference is to what just precedes, in regard to Jesus' suffering of crucifixion because he endured as though a sinner and also endured the opposition of sinners. Christians are to recall this when severely tried, and not to yield even though death should follow fidelity. For example, bad habits make slaves of many who acknowledge the wrong and say they would like to quit the evil, but cannot because it is uncomfortable and even painful to abstain. But the only honest or sincere way is to quit; not dally, but *quit* positively, though it kills—better clean in heaven soon than dirty in hell later. That is taking up the cross to follow Jesus Christ. But when one takes such a positive stand he is likely to find the way clear. One may not

experiment in this; for that is a contradiction of faith and what is not of faith is sin. It would be trying God in deceit, and he knows the heart. Reward is proportionate to the struggle and pain—they prove merit.

Only by losing ourselves can we find supreme good. The very word "aspiration" (not ambition, but hearty hunger) suggests this—"breathing towards" what is higher and more important. The object of our interest must be above ourselves if we would attain to what is worthy. "As unto the Lord" is the Christian rule in all things, even the humblest domestic duty. Thinking and acting with reference to God cultivates the divine consciousness in oneself. It is the best form of worship, and worship tends to assimilate to the object revered. Positive emphasis is placed, in the New Testament, on the *duty* of Christians doing everything in the name of the Christ. It is his due. *They belong to him by his purchase with his blood.* It is unappreciative and ungrateful insolence for redeemed people to ignore their redeemer and owner, acting as independent self-expressers. So long as we bear the name "Christian" we are under contract (by our pledge in baptism) to act under that name, *and no other*. Disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. The Greek for "called" was a business term signifying the name or title under which the business was conducted. It was also used in designating schools of philosophy, to denote what teacher was represented. Now what should be said of a member of a company who would show such disrespect for it as to transact its business under another name, even of a rival firm, so bringing to it the credit and honor due his own company? What should be said of a soldier who fights under a rival flag in violation of his pledge of loyalty? What of a pupil of philosophy, professing full attachment to his teacher, who would talk and practice the doctrines



of a different school? What of those who, in baptism, publicly assume identification with Christ, so as to be called Christians, and then disown his name by doing things in the names of many sects named for men and particular policies? What of those who do charities and benevolences in the name of some society, club, lodge, community-chest, or other institution having no reference to Christ and some actually antichrist? A man who professes Christ has no right (and it is strange how he can have the inclination or be persuaded) to let any society take the place of the church (the body of Christ) in any particular or degree with him. When in that body we are disloyal if we join any society that does any of the work of the church. It is insult to, and denial of, the "only name whereby we must be saved" to have anything to do with any institution offering other ways to heaven. Only thieves try to climb up another way. Yet many professing Christians, including preachers, belong to societies claiming to provide other access to God; other foundation, or basis, for character and other hope of immortality. If churchmen were true to their vows as such, instead of to lodges, the name of Christ would be more honored in the world. It is still true that no man can serve two masters, or travel two roads. But, when a disciple complained to Jesus about a man who was doing Christian work without joining the company of apostles, did not Jesus say to let him go ahead with his good work? Was not the Master broad and tolerant? So argue those who claim freedom from bigotry in doing benevolences outside the church. Cute argument, yes—as cunning and clever as are the Devil's other citations of fragmentary Scripture, and as false and deceitful. The "also written" denies the inference intended in the partial quotation. Although that man did not travel with the apostolic band, he did honor

the same Lord. He did not act in the name of himself or of other mere men or of any society, but *in the name of Jesus Christ*. That was why the Lord defended him against suspicion of hostility or rivalry. When reading Mark 9:38, one should also read verses 39-41 to have a correct understanding. So with all Bible reading.

"And now abide faith, hope, love—these three." All the big, beautiful and bountiful things in man's estimation, even miraculous powers, are temporary. Only the basic spiritual elements are permanent. The Eternal Spirit in Jesus Christ revealed in him and his words the immortal life of which the best and wisest men had but dimly and vaguely guessed. Fools pretending wisdom prate of Jesus as only a product and expression of his time and environment, and virtually exalt themselves above him as more evolved. But true wisdom sees the effulgence of eternal (so unchangeable) truth shining in and through the meek Man of Galilee, and so seeing are transformed into the same image; for it is their inclination (hunger and thirst) toward truth that gets the vision of and filling with truth—the promise is to such.

#### THE WOMAN IN MARBLE

The familiar saying "The proper study of mankind is man" is not true. If we study ourselves we do not rise above self. The proper study of mankind is God. As we ask, seek, knock in that study, we are developed in the divine likeness.

But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory as from the Lord, the Spirit.—2 Cor. 3:18.

A beautiful illustration of the transforming power of a new affection (not emotion) was given by a London business man. [It was years ago that I read the account, so I can give only from memory, and do not recall where



published, so cannot give credit]. Looking from his office window, one morning, he noticed a young girl on the street, coming from the direction of a slum district. It was evident that she came from there; for she was dirty, ragged and unkempt as such neglected children are. In a space at this point of the street was the statue of a beautiful woman, commemorated thus for some notable deed. The child was seen to stop suddenly and gaze at the statue in evident wonder. The man at the window became interested to observe further. The child sat on the curb and continued her astonished gaze. On the following morning the man was looking in the same direction when the same child appeared. Without the look of surprised wonder, but with one of admiration, she again sat and looked at the woman in marble. The now interested man made daily observations as the child came regularly to the spot. He noted some changes in the little student of the statue. First, her face was clean and her hair combed. Then her poor shabby dress was mended and a ribbon was in her hair. She continued to come and look at the beautiful woman in marble with admiration and an evident longing in her little heart. She was not studying herself, nor seeking self-expression. She was looking away from self and seeking to express *what she saw in the statue, because she hungered for just the womanhood shown in the image*. She was not diverted by the confusion about her. One thing was needful to her at that time, and she gave it her undivided attention—to become like the woman in the statue. Play? What was play to her? She was interested in something far more satisfying. She was wiser than the school-books she had never seen; wiser than her environment; wiser than the stuffing and distracting educators—for she, unconsciously, was letting God teach her from the book available to the little slum girl to be a

real, gentle, modest, lovely woman. That is the normal process of culture, and it worked then. The Father reveals to babes what is hidden from the wise and clever. Gradually the girl's face showed a change. It took on a delicacy and refinement unknown among slum folks (contradicting the scientists' dictum that we are victims of environment). The lines began to assume the forms of those in the statue. The business-man recognized something more important than mere business—the development of a human soul—and the child became a lovely girl. I would like to know the sequel.

Some might say that the child only followed her ideal throughout. But she was too young to have ideals. If she had an ideal, the first sight of the statue would not have brought so much surprise as a revelation. And if following an ideal, the image would have been in the mind, making study of the statue unnecessary. Those who follow their ideals do not condescend to study any models outside themselves. They do not need to hunger when full of themselves! Only the sick need any physician. Self-complacency with seared consciences keeps many from coming to Christ. Ideolators are too proud to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

As that child's mind awoke with a startle on the first morning when she saw the image of gentle, loving beauty, her heart began to hunger and thirst for those same qualities, though she could not define them. The children of wisdom instinctively recognize and approve it whenever and wherever met. Those who are willing to do God's will recognize the divine meaning of Jesus Christ and his teaching. Those disposed toward eternal life believe the gospel of salvation. Those who care for righteousness are filled with it. By cherishing what she saw in the marble likeness, the child was transformed into the same likeness—being sensitive, she responded.



So are we changed into the divine likeness as we look at God in his Son, Jesus Christ—his express image. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

That child forsook the appeals of slum surroundings and gave herself to a search for higher being. "Whoever of you forsakes not all that he has can not be my disciple" contradicts all grasping for self-expression, as also does "Let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." That girl put herself out (made it her daily business and pleasure) to go away from herself and her environment to commune with another sphere. She *attended to it*. She *took time for it*—for meditation. She had no place of retirement, but did what she could. In a public street she turned her thoughts from noise to the melody of love for the Good, the Beautiful and the True. The coming of these into her life was ample reward—better than all earthly treasure. She had that attitude which asks, seeks, knocks for higher things, and did not stifle the promptings as so many do. Given a word as to the Kingdom of Heaven, she would be disposed to seek it. That child obeyed the higher promptings, expressing them in action. "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." Doing proves.

#### TRANSFIGURED SOULS

Transfigured, or transformed (same word in the Greek Testament), character and life is not only a possibility and privilege, but a duty. The apostle Paul says: "Be you transformed by the renewing of your mind." This is a command, not a "counsel of perfection". What is commanded is possible. There is no excuse for continuing in the low life or the wicked life. Right in the midst of common surroundings is it possible to become transfigured into real Godlikeness. On a curbstone of a busy city street, close by the slums, a little ragged and

dirty child found the way to a transfiguration. Much more can even a wicked man find transformation of character wherever he may be, just by aspiring to it, or hungering for it, and committing himself to Jesus who is unto all who believe wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Soon it can be said of him that he has "put on the new man which is renewed after the image of him that created him." Pressure of work is no preventive, as is often made an excuse. God is present in every work-place—more there than in places of idleness. Someone has truly said:

Right in the midst of what some people call life's drudgery is the very best place in the world to get transfigured character.

That marble statue was as a mirror reflecting the soul of the woman represented. Looking into that mirror with responsive appreciation, the child was changed into the same image. It is all so wonderfully beautiful and encouraging that we take this parting glimpse, especially because it checks so well with 2 Cor. 3:18:-

We all with unveiled face (having clear and direct view) beholding for ourselves (Greek middle voice) as in a mirror the glory of the Lord (Christ) are transformed into the same image (as he, incarnate, is the image of God) from glory to glory (progressively) even as from the Lord, the Spirit.

So may our lives, even though from the slums of vice, become, in varying measure, reproductions of Christ, so that each one can say "Christ lives in me." Hunger and thirst for righteousness are satisfied.

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS AS OBJECT

To be blessed, happy, commendable, immortal, we must hunger and thirst (be eager) for *righteousness*, not fame, power, riches, social position, or pleasure. And what is righteousness? To the Jew and to ritualists generally it means conformity to ceremonies. To the ascetic it means abnormal living, even to violent repression of the



body (instead of regulation). Christian righteousness is the quality or state of being right, correct, true to the normal nature of man as partaker of God's perfection, holiness, integrity. We should hunger or earnestly desire to be like God, to have his character. In tempting Eve, Satan perverted this into "you shall be as gods, *knowing good and evil*." As usual, most people overlook the significance of the qualifying clause, as did Eve in seeing that the fruit was good to make one wise, as she supposed. Many emphasize knowledge as the proof of piety and divinity, like the Gnostics whose grotesque and pretentious notions Paul denounced as false science (knowledge). Knowledge of evil is a sorry acquisition. Power is another notion of divinity which certain cults exploit—and directed toward earthly advantages, not power unto holiness as Scripture commends. They are blessed, immortal, who *want* to receive the quality or nature of God in the moral bearings or sphere. To them is the pledge that they shall be filled, satisfied, complete. "I AM THAT I AM"—complete, nothing lacking in all that is right. So is GOD. We can be like him if we want to be. With such possibilities, how can any be content to waste aspirations on unworthy things?

Paul warned Timothy to expect a peculiar condition to develop in his time (2 Tim. 4:3,4), and a similar situation exists here today, when many refuse to listen to sound instruction, but turn away from truth to fictions. Children are brought up on twaddle and schooled (not educated) in frothy foolishness so they do not develop a relish for substantial literature and worthy thinking. A few moments ago a small boy on his way to school came in to show me his new Second Reader, which he supposed to be very fine. It is full of nonsense, trifling fairy-stories with crude colored pictures—not one item of any worth; just trash. The Second Readers of my

childhood days and earlier, even in rural schools, were of substantial contents, and children understood them. What of the evolution notion, if succeeding generations have a lower quality of mental activity? There surely is a depraved condition in educational agencies. It was formerly supposed that public schools were to be the bulwark of the nation, but they have become (by a program of materialistic and superstitious propaganda) a most mischievous danger. If church people were wise and awake, they would provide proper parochial schools for their children. So pervasive is the influence of the training in cheap pagan fancy, that many teachers of religion are incapable of holding their minds in the integrity of reason or to the testimony of history. They are so infatuated with the powers and pleasures of imagination that they think they see even the Bible only as fiction, folklore and poetry. Some deny any authority in religion beyond their own fancies. Modern pseudo-Christian literature emphasizes imagination as a spiritual power and source, in impudent contradiction of Scripture, reason and real religious experience. Fiction is rampant, while sound literature is shunned. A wise man seeks truth even though it may contradict himself and show the need of correcting his thinking and doing. Our barbarian ancestors avoided direct thinking as a bother and worry. They let their fancies drift in ignorant and lawless superstition—the origin of fiction and folklore. As late as the time of the translation of the common version of the Bible the word "thought" meant anxiety, worry. So where Jesus said not to be anxious, or worried, about the morrow (as the Greek reads), the rendering was "take no thought"—a misleading statement, and mischievous to some pious ignorant people acting literally. We are supposed to have developed beyond barbarian stupidity so as to think with purpose



and poise, so with power. A few do, but, in the main, the situation we have noted proves that only a gloss has been added to the old mental indolence and vacuity.

In contrast to the indifferent many who disdain the counsel of God, all-wise and good, right at hand in the Scriptures of truth, was the heathen Chinaman far up in north inland China, who hungered and thirsted for righteousness and salvation. Hearing that a foreigner (a missionary) far down in Peking had books in Chinese (Testaments) telling God's way of life, he walked five-hundred miles to that city, found the missionary, and got a copy of the book. After an interview with the man of God, who gave him suitable instructions, he walked back home happy with the treasure, finding his hunger for truth being satisfied. What can the many say in the Day of Judgment who ignore the word of God within immediate reach?

The Kingdom of Heaven offers no less a destiny than making us like God, not in knowing good and evil, but in the fulness of his nature. Jesus said it was his meat and drink to do the Father's will—to express his righteousness on earth. We are to have the same mind. A prominent Methodist pastor just published this:

*The desire to be and do something worth while in the world is the first essential in character building (italics his).*

This directly contradicts all Christ's teaching, especially in the Beatitudes, and emphasized by the apostles. The first and only essential in character building is to be born of the Spirit, and then live in the spiritual sphere. The first three items in the Lord's Prayer—the pattern prayer—are in the direction of desire for God and *his* righteousness, not for our being or doing. When God is our first thought our characters develop without our special attention. Many say this prayer ritually who have scarcely a conception of the spiritual, much less

any real longing for God. When nominal Christians repent (change their minds) in their aspirations, and really hunger and thirst after righteousness, the Kingdom of Heaven will be very manifest on earth, not so much hidden as now.

Those who refuse truth are allowed to have their fill of falsehood, and many are drunk with it today, as cults of delusion crowd one another. Many professed Christians not only do not hunger for the right, but are not willing to be told it. They resent being "preached at" or talked to more than in formal sermons. Religious conversation, or even comment, in ordinary intercourse is disliked and repulsed, yet is very useful. Especially does it help make religion practical instead of the morbid mystery it commonly is. Jesus Christ was always everywhere preaching, teaching, criticising, moralizing. Spiritual minds work that way in the presence of evil carnality needing correction. On the street, in the home, even at table where a guest, he made it his business to attend to his Father's business of helping and saving lost souls. Resenting moralizing or religious talk (unless cant or mere argument) shows no appetite for spiritual things. Any who disdain righteousness are not among the "Blessed". No hunger and thirst, no filling. God does not force his righteousness upon those who do not care for it. Righteousness is not for sale; it cannot be bought. It is a free gift to all who want it. Righteousness is normal; wickedness, abnormal. Yet many are ashamed of righteousness and proud of wickedness—they glory in their shame. Only diseased or perverse minds crave unworthy things. The gospel of Christ offers healing to such minds. By repenting and believing the gospel the normal attitude is restored, so that one can hunger and thirst for righteousness unto all the fulness of God in his own eternal Blessedness.



## THE MERCIFUL

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*Blessed are the merciful ;  
for they shall obtain mercy.*

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THIS proposition is always true, but it is especially in order to consider now when a peculiar situation prevails in Christendom. The emphasis being put upon natural law encourages the notion of fixed relations and inescapable destinies—modern scientific fatalism. The active propaganda of certain old pagan philosophies develops an attitude of indifference, even hardness, towards the misfortunes, sins, weaknesses, sufferings and hindrances of men. The doctrine of Karma gains some following, and other forms of implacability are developing. Inconsistency is a characteristic of the mockery called in the Scripture "Devil's Righteousness". It affects such horror of wrong as to deny repentance, forgiveness and restoration, insisting on full payment. The doctrine of Karma is one expression of this, resulting in hard indifference now. Another extreme is impatient retribution—revenge. It is noticeable that men are most violent against infraction of their own laws that have no basis in any law of God. "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" is in full force today, when men's (and women's) opinions and sentiments, and even mere fashions, have more respect and obedience than have the plainest and most emphatic laws of God, both according to his specific word and the suggestions of nature. Not only is this the situation at large, but it is also peculiarly prevalent in the most

professedly pious institutions. Several details might be given here, but they may better receive separate treatment. The point in connection with our subject is that people are coming to haste and individual violence in some directions while ignoring, even approving, more pernicious things in other ways. For example, much piety is assumed in holding up holy hands in horror of pugilistic contests by people who applaud with the very same hands a ball or tennis or oratorical contest, or a fight to see which Sunday school class will win the tiny prize for attendance. Yet identical principles of pride and vainglory are involved. And, while God has issued no direct command about boxing bouts, he has specifically and emphatically commanded church members to do *nothing* in strife or vainglory. So do many denounce wine drinking while drinking coca-cola, yet moderate use of wine is healthful, while any use of the other is injurious. The jewel of consistency seems to be in the pawn shop of fanaticism.

Violence and murder mark the activity of increasing numbers who undertake to assert their own causes with haste. While courts are often dallying and over-lenient, a worse situation is shown in the violence with which a certain law is tried to be enforced—a man-made law in contradiction to the primary principle that virtue can not be forced. For police protection human government may bear the sword, but for moral reform only spiritual means are effective, and permitted by God. In trying to shoot an artificial righteousness into, or through, men by using the federal government, the churches adopted the method of Mohammed, the false prophet, so being untrue to Christ and grieving the Holy Spirit. With such substitution of flesh for Spirit, religion has become a humbug. It is called vanity in Scripture—an empty farce or fake, just what a humbug is. Being without



spiritual power, the churches resort to tricks to catch and keep members—entertainments, "beautifying the service" (increasingly ritualistic), sensational ventures, dramatics, movies, contests, games, and (worst of all because so pretentious and deceptive) psychic excitements by wandering professional money-grubbers who call themselves evangelists but are not (as in Rev. 2:2). Repentance is very much needed here.

We are approaching the conditions of former times when inquisitory violence was practiced in the name of righteousness; when that hideous hodge-podge of religion, that infernal monstrosity described in Revelation XVII, violating every principle of right, impudently and violently insulted the Lord Jesus Christ (though professing his name) by unmercifully persecuting those who did not wear its mark or label. We boast of tolerance, and there is such where it is least fitting, even where it compromises the name and truth of Jesus Christ. At the same time there is drastic interference with personal rights of individuals in things quite outside man's right of dictation or interference—Puritanic (Pharisaic) blue laws, *et cetera*. The sword is a boomerang in the hands of reformers. So warned our Lord. The present special experiment in our land by those professing his name, in disobedience of the warning, is fast confirming the principle he emphasized—the harsher the attempted enforcing, the bolder the defiance. If Christians would read with open eyes Gal. 3:10-27 and much cognate scripture, the ground would be less soaked with the blood of victims of intemperate "temperance" zeal and fanatical piety of Prohibitionism. The trend of our day is toward the old Paganism described in the first chapter of Romans, where the list of horrors closes with the words "implacable, unmerciful". But there is wide tolerance of the filthiest of all false religions, the Oriental

Spiritism from India. It is amazing how pastors of old evangelical and orthodox churches declare from their pulpits that India has valuable religious truths for us. [The diabolical propaganda is exposed in my pamphlet on *The Indian Menace*]. Quite in contrast to what we have just noted is the Beatitude we now briefly study.

The MERCIFUL—considerate, charitable, sympathetic, compassionate, longsuffering, tender-hearted, pitiful, forgiving—are the happy of this Beatitude. Ancient Pharisees were unmerciful toward those who suffered, accusing them of having sinned so as to bring on the punishment of pain—virtually the doctrine of karma which Jesus denied. It was a sham goodness that affected to recoil from sin by severity toward the suffering sinful (really toward those whose sins became thus exposed). Dramatic show of virtue by severity toward those caught in wrong-doing is a not uncommon hypocrisy, and hypocrisy is far from righteous. Honest people, conscious of their own liabilities, make allowances for others even beyond what they do for themselves—"considering yourself, lest you also be tempted." To put oneself in the other's place is not indifference to wrong, but compassion toward the wrongdoer. Such an attitude of gentleness and patience is Godlike. Jesus Christ, himself sinless, put himself in the sinner's place, learning the temptations and hindrances to holiness so he can sympathize and have compassion from the standpoint of experience. Mercy is greater than justice. God honors justice, but delights in mercy. The merciful are like him, partaking of his merciful nature. They are "Blessed"—immortal in that attitude.

Mercy has been called "the divinest prerogative of sovereignty—the special prerogative of a king." True mercy must be based on righteousness. Maudlin sentiment often poses as mercy, but is only moral quackery.



Many prate of the love of God as overlooking all sin, but that is a distortion of mercy. Mercy releases and relieves the guilty, but not in blind or stupid disregard of righteousness. Mercy is not the reckless extravagance of kindness that modern seared consciences want and so decree. Mercy is connected with redemption and reconciliation—too big a subject to discuss incidentally here. Mercy as an expression of love and compassion is the best badge a Christian need wear. It includes sober humility, meekness, peaceableness, and other elements of the blessed life. Christ has no regard for the trumpery so much affected as tokens of Christian profession. Tiny crosses, crucifixes or other trinkets, uniforms, special styles of garments, hats, bonnets, flags, banners, ribbons—all such things are superstitious and without any Christian element. "By this shall men know that you are my disciples—that you love one another" said Jesus. And it has been so. Love is merciful and patient. In mercy, Christ gave himself to benefit others. So, as someone has said, "The essential thing in an act of mercy is for us to give ourselves." In so doing, we have fellowship with the Son of God—we are blessed, immortal.

The Greek word for mercy (*eleos*) is peculiar. In its classic form (masculine) and use, it meant pity or commiseration in a general sense. In scriptural and theological use (neuter), it has a more active and interested meaning—not mere pity for, but sympathy with so as to wish to help, not only the unfortunate but the sinful. To have sympathy *with* means much more than to have sympathy only *for*. It means mercy that participates in the suffering and offers to share the burden, not just to look at it and say "Sorry, but it can't be helped." Jesus' mercy led him to take upon himself the troubles and even the sins of men. He identified himself with

sinner, even dying in their stead. And it was he who said "Blessed are the merciful". It means something; for it is no idle remark, no oratorical phrase, no stage gush. Merciful manners, merely, do not receive the commendation "Blessed", but merciful conduct. The religion of "Intention" may satisfy those who are too ignorant to know that real Christianity has no official priests in the church, no "Mother-of-God" to pray to, no purgatory to be prayed and "massed" out of for a fat fee to the performer, but faith without works is a dead humbug. "Depart in peace; be you warmed and filled" is only play-piety in a Sunday school drama. It is work-a-day doing that heaven's bookkeepers record. "To instruct the ignorant, warn the careless, pity and comfort the sorrowful, not to be severe on those whom we have advantage against" is one list of merciful acts. Genuine evangelism (missionary work) may be added to the list, with all deeds of charity and relief done in honest heart-sympathy, excluding some popular spectacular community performances too unchristian to be classed with real mercies.

Christ sympathizes with us in our weaknesses, instead of scolding us. He came not to accuse, but to save. He knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. A notorious (not celebrated) so-called evangelist (means gospel preacher) is not preaching the gospel when he raves and storms and threatens to hell every man who does not at once take every beer bottle out of the ice box and throw it away. The Holy Spirit does not convict of sin because of beer bottles, card-playing, gambling, dancing, prize-fighting, or even worse things, but because of not believing in Jesus Christ as Saviour from sin. Throwing away the several bad things does not procure salvation, but is a result of it. The Beatitudes apply where there is a trend toward truth. Mercy can



be exercised toward the ignorant and weak, not to the deliberate, presumptuous, wilful, or hypocritical. For such Jesus had not compassion, but severe condemnation. God overlooked much evil in the olden times, but since Christ brought the divine light into the world there is no excuse for continuing in sin. We are held accountable to the word of revealed truth in the New Testament. Refusal or neglect to read that book has no excuse now. Most people read trash in preference. Mercy cannot plead for them in the Day of Judgment.

Mercy does not accuse, but does criticise. As shown in the early part of this book, true criticism is valuable kindness and should not be resented. Criticism applies to actions, while accusation refers also to motives. As an expert accuser the Devil is supreme. His very name means accuser, or slanderer. He has no mercy. Many good Christians suffer from his tantalizing accusations that come in the form of thoughts that seem to arise in their own minds, though sometimes as direct inner voices. Sometimes it is made to appear that God or the Holy Spirit is accusing, making it even seem that the promise of pardon and salvation in Jesus Christ has not been kept with them, though they have believed and obeyed the gospel fully. Such thoughts are from the Devil trying to discourage and to destroy faith. One must then hold fast to God's word as unbreakable. His mercy is everlasting and his promises cannot fail.

Love is patient and hopeful toward the erring; does not impute evil intention but seeks to excuse; covers a multitude of faults. God is love. We are to be like him. "For they shall obtain mercy" applies only to the merciful. "Forgive us as we forgive others." Further: We cannot be forgiven *until we have forgiven*, if we have been injured or offended, as emphatically stated in the parable of the unjust steward. He wanted and expected

to be forgiven the big debt while unwilling to forgive the little one, but it did not work. An incident is told of John Wesley's voyage from England to America, that he met Governor Oglethorp on the boat, one day, when he (Oglethorp) was in a rage at his valet for some little offense. When the servant apologized and asked forgiveness, the Governor snapped out "I never forgive." Wesley touched him gently and said: "Then, sir, I hope you never sin." Oglethorp felt the just rebuke and at once calmed down.

The merciful are not severe with those who may be in their power—their servants or their beasts. "A merciful man is merciful to his beast" reads Scripture. It is more important to be gentle, kind and merciful both to man and beast than to attend church or even prayer meetings. Who said so? God. When? Where? Read Hosea 6:6, Micah 6:6-8, Matthew 9:13 and 12:7. An interesting and important truth is expressed in these passages. To understand and obey it, would make a bigger reformation in Christendom than was the historic Lutheran Reformation. "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" means that God wants us to act like him among men in ordinary life rather than spend time and money in the most elaborate religious ceremonies in the most gorgeous buildings. Indeed, true Christianity has no place for ceremonies, temples or altars. Their use always means corruption of the faith in departure from the simplicity of Christ. Christians act by and in the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, the disposition to do right. Mercy is retroactive—the merciful are shown mercy. "Repent" is the word to the unmerciful. "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that has shown no mercy" (James 2:13). But "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy."



## THE PURE IN HEART

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*Blessed are the pure in heart;  
for they shall see God.*

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THIS is, in some respects, the most important of the Beatitudes. All are vitally important in defining character in terms of eternal reality—a description of God and his heavenly order brought down to earth to guide man in the way of true life—but this one has special emphasis. Sometimes it serves as a test of interest in God. A community once refused to attend a free lecture announced as on the subject "How to See God". There was no interest in that topic, although several sects of alleged Christianity were located there. But a game of basket-ball or a rotten movie in the same hall would have had a crowd of those people. God does not manifest himself to the unwilling or indifferent. A community, like an individual, that prefers to see the Devil is left to its choice. In the pioneer days of Minnesota some German atheists started the town of New Ulm with the positive provision that no church or preacher should ever be allowed in the place. It was not long until New Ulm was so violent in all wickedness that the promoters were so scared as to write to another town begging that a preacher be sent over at once. No halter is on men, regardless of Calvin's dictum. God lets us have what we want. "Choose whom you will serve." "Whosoever will." "You will not come to me." If people love not the truth, God lets them enjoy such lies as they like to believe. The world is full of delusions now

*because people do not care for the truth—they prefer falsehood. They will not investigate Bible teachings. This explains the many cults of unchristian and perverted religion that prosper everywhere, even in this literate land. One reads in the religious press that people are hungry for the spiritual, but where are they? They are always somewhere else—one never meets them. About the only visible religious interest is in sectarian quibbles, or in psychic novelties and excitements that have their run and fade into obscurity or slide into the rut of conventional ritualism. These do not have the quality of immortality—they are not of God.*

"Blessed are the pure in heart." In some of its implications this proposition was a startling comment on the Jewish piety of the time when Jesus spoke. Most emphatically was the call to repentance needed in this item—change of mind, of attitude, as to what constitutes purity, and the practice resulting. Purity, among the Jews, especially the religious leaders, was a matter of ritual ceremony, not of essential quality or character of being. Defilement was in the merest touch of what was ceremonially "unclean"—whatever did not meet the exactions of a ritual which was intended only as a rudimentary symbol for instructing stupid minds, but which was perverted into an expression of supposed actual merit or fault. The ritual purifications specified in Leviticus were minute and cumbersome, and carnally perverse application of them led to a fanatical zeal that added to ordinances the fancies of men until any real attempt at such purity was a burden impossible to be fully carried. So fixed had become such ignoble notions of purity that what Jesus taught about it was a revolution hard to accept. Pharisees denounced him as an innovator, an impious man and a traitor to traditions. He replied with becoming vigor, using language less



gentle than was his wont because the situation called for direct rebuke. There is no soft pedal on the plain non-constructive criticisms in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. Only the densest stupidity, tempered with wilful perversity, could think that outward preciseness would satisfy the very nature of personality. Internal purity must be required. When purifying power is offered free to all who wish it, there is no excuse for any who remain unclean. Only a hypocritical disposition (which Scribes and Pharisees had) could be content with mere outward show of purity. Out of the heart are the issues of life; for in the heart are the essential elements of personality—of being.

Traditions of men were substituted for the commandments of God, and were given preference in observance. The traditions of the elders were held to be of supreme importance, to be punctiliously observed. For instance, upon return from a walk, a man must have his hands baptized to purify from any possible contamination by touch of any person or thing not ritually pure. Large jars of water were kept beside the entrance to homes for this purpose. A servant was always ready to dip water and pour over the hands for this purification; for no Jew would have thought of dipping anything into water to purify it. Dipping defiled because the pollution was retained in solution instead of being carried away. So running water was used in ceremonies of purification. Either pouring or sprinkling made water running for ritual purpose. The Jews recognized John's baptism as a ritual purification. His converts stepped down into the running water of the Jordan, and John dipped up a little water and poured or sprinkled it upon the people. The words "into the Jordan" do not mean "under" it as some prejudiced people fancy. Every reference to baptismal action by the Holy Spirit speaks of his being

poured out or upon. The rendering "baptized in the Holy Spirit" is sheer nonsense of sectarian affectation, as anybody knows who understands the original. Affusion was the only method of baptism known for about three centuries, as has been clearly proven. Real Jews would be horrified at the sight of groups being baptized in tanks of still water; for it would appear to them the grossest ceremonial pollution. Sins of the first dipped would pollute the water for all following, while not at all freeing him. The more dipped, the dirtier the mess until the last one would virtually be drowned (ceremonially) in a pool of filth. Like Prof. Fairfield, mentioned on page seventy, every candid Baptist would soon see his blunder if he would investigate the subject.

In old Jewish customs, before every use cooking vessels, tables, dishes, couches, and such articles must be baptized to purify from any possible ritual defilement. These baptisms (see the Greek of Mark 7:3,4) were not by dipping, but by pouring or sprinkling (Carson's fanatical opinion having come too late). Such perverted piety made life a burden of bondage to ceremonies. So when some Jews denounced Jesus for neglecting these trivial ceremonies (not Mosaic, but mere traditions of the elders), he told them something. He said they were scrupulous to keep dishes clean outside while leaving them filthy inside. He even called them whitewashed sepulchers full of rotten bones—ceremoniously pious, but of foul character. If they would clean out their hearts their outward conduct would be clean automatically. That law is universal now. Some superficial people say that those ancient rituals were for the purpose of enforcing sanitation among the ignorant by giving it a religious bearing. But if they were half as wise as they imagine themselves to be, they would see otherwise. The modern religion of sanitation is more



superstitious than were some of the old superstitions. Sanitation, not sanctification, is the concern of this so enlightened materialistic age. Germs are more feared than are devils. They say that devils are only myths, while germs are horrible realities. Pure foods and drugs are demanded for the body, but impure literature and shows for the mind—the heart does not matter. He by whom and for whom the world was made surely knows the facts, and he said that what goes into a man by the mouth does not defile. Strangely in denial of Christ in this, and otherwise insulting him (stressing sanitation above salvation and suspicion above fellowship) is the use of individual cups in the Eucharist, instead of the common cup which alone expresses the significance of the rite (communion). What meaning would there be to a smoking of the pipe of peace by a band of Indians so suspicious of one another as to have each brave smoke his own pipe instead of passing around the one symbolic pipe? Love is not suspicious, nor is confidence. Partaking of the Lord's Supper unworthily brings condemnation, and the unworthy practice regarding the cup is one cause of church deadness today. Who ever knew any sanitary mischief result from the use of the common cup? When our Lord instituted the memorial ceremony he used one cup, having it passed from one to another, and with no officious priest carrying it. No man or church council has any right to change any of the ordinances or doctrines received from the Head of the church through the apostles. We are to hold the word as received, remembering that it came to us only, not through us. God kept his promise to Abraham, and no revelation has come from God through a Gentile, or ever will. Many have claimed to receive revelations but they are deceptive imitations from evil spirits. All religions, cults and sects based on or promoted by any

alleged revelations since the apostles who, only, were appointed and inspired to complete the revelation of divine mysteries (Gal. 1:8,9 and Col. 1:25) are false and diabolical. The world is full of such today—various forms of Spiritism. Mohammedanism, Mormonism, Swedenborgianism, Seventh-Day Adventism, "Christian Science" and its derivatives (as New Thought), Russellism (under whatever pseudonym), "Pentecostalism" in various forms, Theosophy—these and their derivatives are conspicuous in claiming bases in special revelations. The mischief they do is very great, besides that of the cults only claiming to be new discoveries. These all use the Bible, but misuse it as did the Devil in quoting with attempt to mislead Jesus. Christendom is safe only as the exact and complete Scriptures are held fast in all modesty and purity of mind and heart.

#### BEAUTY OF GOODNESS

Microscopy reveals in coarse weeds inner delicacies of structure and color that surprise the student. Some beauties are only skin-deep, but there are others hidden by the skin. God looks on the heart, not on the face, except as it expresses the heart. The most attractive people do not have doll-faces, nor painted faces, but plain faces that are so clean of artificial fixing that their pure hearts show through. Jesus Christ, the Perfect Man—the only unspotted one—was not handsome as commonly pictured. He is prophetically described as a very plain and unattractive man. He was no athlete. He had no beauty to be desired—no form or comeliness to make a personality. He was like a root out of dry ground (suggesting a shrivelled form). His face was marred more than any man's, and his form more than of the sons of men. Sin does not beautify, but disfigures, the body. However secret the sin, it shows in the



face and form, even though there are natural lines of beauty. Lasciviousness, for instance, makes repulsive the most delicate features. A marked increase of this hideousness confronts one on every street since women have so fully emancipated themselves from the modesty God enjoins, thereby inciting the lustful thoughts of men. Jesus, the incarnate mercy of Heaven, is so very indignant at such devilish tempting to sin that he says it is better for women to be drowned in the sea than to follow a fashion that does mischief. How any woman professing to be at all Christian can be so false to both instinctive and commanded modesty as is so flagrantly prevalent is a puzzle to angels and to pure-hearted men. More on this later. Resuming the beauty matter, Jesus was not sinful, but he took upon himself the sins of the world, all kinds of sins. So his face and body were said to be marred as no others. But he was pure within, as his worst infidel enemies have admitted. So one may not judge faces too severely. Inheritance and malice of demons may explain some disfigurements, and also illness or accident. Some modest man wrote thus of

#### A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

Some folks in looks  
Take so much pride  
That they don't think  
Much what's inside.  
Well, as for me, I know  
My face can ne'er be made  
A thing of grace.  
So I rather think I'll see  
How I can fix th'inside of me  
So folks will say  
He looks like sin, but  
Ain't he beautiful within?

No cosmetic is needed there. The glory of simple goodness shines right through until the homely face is sweet

with the benediction of Heaven, and the soul is happy in the assurance "Blessed are the pure in heart." If women could be made to see the beauty of transfigured lives, the landscape would not be so bespotted with the disfigured lives that now prevail—the dress question in a nutshell. Prettier than a picture is this one:

She may not be beautiful, may not be specially well educated, may not be musical, nor an artist, nor "clever" in any way; but wherever she moves she leaves a benediction. Her sweet patience is never disturbed by the sharp words that fall about her. The children love her because she never tires of them. She helps them with their lessons, listens to their frets and worries, mends their broken toys, straightens out their tangles, settles their little quarrels, and finds time to play with them. When there is sickness in the home she is the angel of comfort. Her face is always bright with the outshining of love. Her voice has music in it as it falls in cheerful tenderness on a sufferer's ear. Her hands are wondrously gentle as their soothing touch rests on the aching head, or as they minister in countless ways about the bed of pain.—*J. R. Miller* in "UPPER CURRENTS."

And her name must be Mary.

The lives that make the world so sweet  
Are shy, and hide like humble flowers;  
We pass them by with our careless feet,  
Nor dream 'tis their fragrance fills the bower,  
And cheers and comforts us, hour by hour.

—Quoted in "UPPER CURRENTS" without signature.

#### PURE IN HEART, PURE IN LIFE

It is impossible to escape the law of result—as sow, so reap. "By their fruits you shall know them." The pure in heart do not live impurely in voluntary thinking or speaking or doing. Pure hearts hate vice and flee from carnal lust. A man of pure heart does not seek excitement to, or indulgence in, any immorality. He especially avoids incitement to sex-expression, which has always been the chief indulgence in Paganism. A woman of pure heart does not paint her face and lips to emphasize an appearance of sexual vigor (which is the physio-



logical basis for rouge and lip-stick beauty), or go half naked so as to invite lustful looks. She does not adopt the fashions of Parisian whores and call it emancipation of woman. It is no time to mince words in this when the world is in a big whirl of sex-orgies until it is confessed by physicians that, in even small cities, virtuous girls are rare and in an isolated mountain village contraceptives have been found. In olden times, when a female dressed as a whore she was treated as such (so recorded in the Old Testament). Some pages back we noted the psychological relation between dress and mental state. Wearing sackcloth, for instance, expressed humiliation. When a Jew did something unbecoming manhood, he expressed shame for his degradation by shaving off his beard. To this day a smooth face is a shame to a man, and a reflection on the Creator. The Egyptians appear to have been the only ancient people to shave the beard, a practice associated with a filthy nature-worship requiring affected effeminacy in men. But their innate sense of propriety led kings and judges to try to look like men by wearing false beards while sitting officially. Only a stupid perversion makes shaven faces the fashion now. Germs? Bosh! Then why not be consistent and shave head and eyebrows? And are not clothes as liable to carry germs? Were doctors any more busy before the germ fad with its sanitary stir got so busy than they are now? A look into the history of the germ scare shows it to be much of a scarecrow. I have known doctors who wore beards, even big ones, without killing their patients, but now they would be boycotted as dangerous. As a young man I spent some years "on the road" (during the un-germed regime), with no sanitation of trains or hotels, and never caught a thing. Why such dread of contamination from whiskers and communion cups (before noted) while fearless

as to pocket-books? Who ever trembles before a bill or a coin from a hand as hairy as Esau's? What lovely females in paints and pants refuse worn-smooth nickels in change from dusty cash registers? Mammonism is apparently the only religion now practiced here that is free from the superstition of sanitation! As to whippersnappers, they might come back into respectability if the European "nobility" that sets the fashions for males were to reform from a vice that affects unnatural effeminacy. There may be some relation between the current fashion of shaving and that of sex immorality. Clement of Alexandria, a leader in the early church, wrote:

A true gentleman must have no mark of effeminacy visible on his face, or on any other part of his body.

Deuteronomy 22:5 reads:

The woman shall not wear that which pertains to a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.

There is no record that God changed his mind about this. Women are now brazenly defying God in dressing like men and acting like men, doing their work even to wearing the toga. Question: Does wearing a smooth effeminate face come under this displeasure of God?

When mental bias is expressed in dress there is no mere guess as to what is back of Fashion's program of undress. In their boast of self-emancipation, women impudently challenge the tried safeguards of society and boldly break God's commands to modesty. Already is the reward coming with furious vengeance. Homes are becoming mere dog kennels, trysting places for "companionate marriage", "birth control" filthiness and an abomination of all sexual perfidy and uncleanness. A shudder greets the inquiry "What will the next generation be?" In Deut. 23:18 God classifies whores and dogs together as abominations. Jesus Christ classified some people as dogs (but said that whores are better than



Pharisees and hypocrites, and saves those who let him). So "dog-kennel" is a fitting name for homes of doggish people. Dogs are conspicuous for sexual perversion and shameless filth. Is it significant that so many (especially childless) homes are occupied by pet dogs? With more "companionate marriage" and "birth control" perfidy and filth will be more pet dogs. Did somebody whisper "Three of a kind"? No need to whisper in a radio air; the thing howls forth its own proud shame. It is just announced (at this writing) that dog beauty parlors are working in London where pet dogs are treated at high prices for shampoos, hair curling, scented sprays, nail trimming, etc. And so forth in America? Why not? "As in the days of Noah". But was there such utter folly then? Plain words? We are studying the Beatitudes in daylight, remember, not by the flicker of the conventional candle. We do not even soften terms by camouflaging "whore" with "demi-monde" or "hetæra". No such gloss is put on sin in Scripture, where "companionate marriage" is called concubinage.

#### MODESTY DEFIED

The intentional defiance of modesty by shape-showing is frankly admitted by some females and unintentionally in implications by others. The simple matter of overdisplay of exposed anatomical members (legs would be too plain a word to go along with contraception) shows that the show is expected and designed to be seen to the best advantage. A little more of female emancipation may put us where God will need to drive us out in furs instead of fig leaves. The plainness of these criticisms is warranted by the plainness of the nakedness they rebuke. Defiant immodesty has no excuse and no right to protest. Men could correct the evil at once, if they would (each in his own home), but most of them enjoy

the lust-provoking shows, so do not correct. No false doctrine of women's emancipation frees men from their responsibility as heads of households to require modesty in dress and deportment of all members. Failure is sin.

A prominent periodical once reporting a straw-vote on the short skirt fashion stated that a majority voted to retain the abbreviated dress. A young woman voter commented with her ballot: "Not so much to intrigue men with our knees, but for the sake of convenience." Her "so much" admitted that scant dress is partly intended to allure—an act of deliberate impurity. Purity is not a matter of place in the line of impulses or motives, but of secret heart quality. Any female that at all, even as tenth motive, exposes herself to attract men is a whore in principle, though not yet openly. Jesus said that any man who looks on a woman to lust after her thereby commits adultery with her in his heart—in principle. So women are whores in principle when they seek to attract men by scant clothing or by using rouge or its substitutes. The color red is a psychic stimulant to sexual passion. Red clothing, wall-paper, etc., are better left out of the picture. That young woman also confessed that convenience is to her more than modesty—supreme selfishness. A significant feature of that straw vote was the proposition that women shall decide whether to be modest or not without reference to what God says. Self-expression and self-gratification are put above a divine command. God is impudently ignored. All who forget God are to be cast into hell. What can women say in the Day of Judgment about the convenience of a fashion that lured many men to destruction? Having acted as tempters on earth, their place will be with the chief tempter in the lake of unquenchable fire. They cannot go where God is and the pure in heart will be. "Repent" is the urgent call in this matter.



Unclean spirits vie with one another in devising all filthiness. Wicked men in a crowd of loafers vie with each other to tell the filthiest smut. But it takes the dear, gentle, lovely, refined, sweet, timid, weak ladies to vie with one another for the honor of being Queen of Immodesty. The ancient story of the nymphs who, with siren songs, allured and bewitched sailors so that safety was found only in lashing themselves to masts before reaching the dangerous place is tame compared with the actual situation everywhere now. Tying to a mast is easy escape from a temptation that comes only to the ear from a distance. But a temptation thrust immediately before the eyes calls for a heroism of purpose, integrity and persistence that can be sustained only by special help from Heaven. That some men stay pure is proof that God makes a way of escape for those who commit themselves unto him in assurance of faith. Some women say that if men were pure in heart they would not be tempted by the displays, which is stupid defense of their immodesty. Even pure hearts are in the abnormal material environment as yet only partly recovered from the curse of sin. It ill becomes women to reproach men for a susceptibility brought into the world by mother Eve. God enjoins special modesty on women because of Eve, and they are flagrantly defiant in now assuming the control of things in the pride of "emancipation". Jesus was certainly pure in heart, yet was subject to all temptations, but had courage, faith and strength to resist, so did not sin. Temptation is not sin on the part of the tempted, but on the part of the tempter. Yielding is sin for the tempted. Timothy was a clean young man, yet Paul reminded him of the need to flee youthful lusts. He would have to do some running now when near-naked women thrust themselves into close view everywhere. The apostle Paul had to

keep his body under rigorous subjection, yet no flapper in "shorts" can say he was impure, else he would not need so to guard himself. Females who sneer at men's weakness (forgetting their own weakness against mere fashion appeal) need to be reminded of the special guilt of those who tempt the weak—a meanness so devilish that Christ said it would be better for such to be cast into the sea with a big stone tied on to prevent escape. Yet some active church women are in the contemptible gang that causes weak men to stumble. We are not wasting words over a trifle. God's word is emphatic in the matter, which is so seriously important that Jesus said men should submit to surgery rather than surrender the integrity of their virtue. The excuse that it is convenient and comfortable to be naked will not pass in the Judgment Day. Women were not intended for athletes, swimmers or workers in masculine lines. So no excuse may be claimed for apes of masculinity.

What Paris does in setting the pace in immodest fashions is not surprising when we know that, in the French Revolution, that city carried in public procession a notorious whore as symbol of reason, before whom many prostrated themselves. Their posterity is only reaping the whirlwind. When America locks arms with France because of Freedom she becomes partaker in the fellowship of unchastity. Boast of Puritan antecedents does not exempt from the corruption that follows the unholy friendship. Christian in claim but pagan in practice, is our society that bows to the French goddess of fashion though flaunting pious phrases, singing "Gospel Hymns" and mumbling effete rituals. The big image of the goddess-of-liberty (not capitalized) that stands at our front door proclaims reversion to the ancient idolatry of feminism that cursed the ancient world, a veiled picture of which is given in the first chapter of Romans.



This land is aping the immoralities of pagan Rome, and there is no power of correction in the Ebionism that is so generally accepted as Christianity. Going-to-meeting programs, taking-part pledges, singing me-my jazzed songs, carrying philacteric pocket Testaments, tithing, "Sabbath-keeping" and Prohibition piety are powerless for virtue while fundamental Christian principles are disregarded and even repudiated. No word is more in order now than the "Repent" that Jesus used.

I dwell some on this subject, not because it is pleasant or pretty, but because it is pertinent and prominent in the peculiar policies of present professedly Christian society. Silence of preachers and public teachers has given its consent to so much of the evil that there is a special need of the treatment being given here. When preachers' wives and daughters, besides other females of their flocks, join the flapper gang it is time for the plain protest here offered. And I am old and informed enough to know what should be said, whether they will hear or forbear.

Craftiness, not purity, is the world's idea of virtue. Steal, but don't get caught. Practice fornication, but use contraceptives or call it companionate marriage. Be incontinent, but practice birth-control. Dress like a harlot, but don't let them see you perform beyond petting in the park or by the roadside or on the porch. But, as we have already noted, motives and impulses are more significant than open action in determining character and destiny. Suggestion may tempt as much as express invitation. In some things it is worse, because its appeal to imagination incites mental states that continue after the suggestion passes, affecting both soul and body more injuriously than does actual deed. In nothing is this so seriously true as in sex matters. The Bible repeatedly emphasizes the need of avoiding lasciviousness

or concupiscence as very bad and destructive. A very wrong delicacy keeps this subject in taboo, though the evil is the most conspicuous everywhere. Immodest dress, literature, pictures and plays feed the evil continually. Immodest dress makes many Potiphar's wives in principle, if not in very deed. He who said to pray for deliverance from evil also commands women to be modest as a part of that deliverance. Immodest women help to hinder such deliverance. A woman who has no regard for her modesty attaches no value to her virtue. No protest of pretense can change that fact. Angels resent immodesty, impropriety, insubordination and irreverence (1 Cor. 11:10). Most woman now are guilty of all these, and more. Modern women reject the word of God which says there is honor in modesty, while immodesty is a disgrace. Fashion? What have Christian women to do with fashion, we repeat? "Be not conformed, but be transformed" completely kills the plea of fashion.

Some protest that God made the female form and said it was good, so it is proper to show it. And God makes lightening which is good for its purpose, but it is dangerous to get in its path. Good things may not be misused. Wine is good; God made it. It is very good for intestinal digestion, and should be used with meals. But its misuse (in excess) is wrong. Sin spoiled the whole creation, especially human attitudes and activities, so that what was created as good became perverted unto evil. The best became the worst, even as it took a high angel to fall unto a devil. The most spiritual Christians suffer the severest temptations. The highest function of physical man was to reproduce the image of God on earth. Normal procreation is pure and wonderful, with no wrong thought or impulse. But sin degraded human thinking and impulse into lust for mere gratification of



feeling until noblest instincts became basest passions. Adam and Eve were not sexually self-conscious until after they lost their innocence by violating their integrity. They tried to hide, but could not. Fig leaves (or shorts) were not enough in God's judgment, so he gave them full garments instead, and has always insisted on full clothing as proper protection to modesty and help to virtue—a concession to the situation in kindness to mankind. To make clothing a means of adornment is a stupid perversion of its purpose. It is to beautify the badge of shame which clothing, in a sense, is as a mark of the loss of innocence. Making the badge pretty may camouflage that shame, but only adds the other shame of pride and vanity, which the carnal mind glories in, and only the spiritual mind condemns. Better be content with the simple and modest badge. To beautify clothing is to make it appear as a badge of honor and glory instead of shame and disgrace. To make clothing an incitement to lust by suggestiveness is to defeat its intended purpose—an insult to God and a demonstration of devilish depravity. It is a defiance of God in making what he intended for a protection to modesty a provocation to lust—so diabolical is the fashion goddess. It is amazing how any women professing godliness can be deluded into following fashions instead of using the simple dress that shelters modesty and virtue. Claiming emancipation, women assert themselves even against the wise restrictions of God for their own safety and that of society. The result is most disastrous. Emancipated boldness and impudence make women brazen and insolent in violating nature and the command of God in a way that means ruin now and hell hereafter. Anybody of sense knows what it all means. Men are bad enough, but less conspicuous along such lines. They, like Adam, usually take what is offered by women. To

help man, not to hinder him by offering enticements to wrong, is woman's work. God deals with matters as they are, not as they might be. So he says that virtue must be safeguarded by special modesty in manner, speech and dress. All history and experience approve his wisdom in this. The pure in heart recognize and follow the will of God in this. Others insult God as not knowing what is proper in the emergency.

From ancient times there has been a recognized relation between character and dress, as we have noted. In early times harlots were known by their dress, and men so inclined were expected and permitted to treat as a harlot any woman whose dress indicated her to be such. See the case of Judah and Tamar (Gen. 38:12-30), and the writings of ancient philosophers and literary men. Even an inexperienced man instinctively suspects any woman of being "loose" whose dress is such as to indicate that she does not cherish her own modesty. If the civil authorities now would permit men who are so disposed to accost on the streets as harlots those who look like such, many women would soon run to cover as not yet hardened in the immodesty that prompted and sustains current near-nude fashions. It would be a kindness and protection to the really decent people yet remaining on earth.

An ancient writer tells us that, when the matrons of Rome were modest, that nation had not one divorce in six-hundred years. But when women put away restraint and modesty divorce became common, as now here. Girls and young women are not alone in this wicked fad; for mature matrons also advertise themselves as also possible Mrs. Potiphar's. Young men of today who are strong enough to resist and keep clean merit a better reward than Joseph received; for the invitation he got once comes many times now. Young men must, in



spirit and effect, keep their eyes closed everywhere, even in church. Church officials who are faithful to plain Scripture exclude immodestly dressed women from the congregation. O the times! O the manners! Besides other evil, this immodesty is disastrous to domestic relations. In ancient Rome it got so bad that people married only to hide prostitution. Many married only to be divorced. Ulhorn says:

Friends exchanged wives and it was not considered in the least dishonorable to employ the name of friendship for the purpose of seducing a friend's wife. Seneca goes so far as to affirm that marriage was only contracted because adultery afforded a new and piquant charm. Matrimonial fidelity was made a subject of ridicule. "Whoever has no love affair is despised" affirms the same Seneca.

Even worse things are on record that one hesitates to repeat, including so-called birth control. Testimony is given that some of these evils are practiced in France and America, possibly elsewhere also. As now used

Clothes have more to do with sex appeal than they have as protection against inclement weather.—*G. Bernard Shaw.*

Candid men who are not spiritually concerned admit the significance of the situation, as in this quotation. "Lovely and alluring" is the frequent description of a woman's coiffure. Alluring—the specialty of harlots! As Clement of Alexandria said,

It is a wicked thing for beauty to be a snare to men. Nor is it seemly for a woman to wish to make herself conspicuous.

The ancients knew about the influence of certain colors on sex impulse and made diligent use of it. In this connection it is well to repeat what was said on a former page, in hope that a better understanding may tend to correct the evil. Purple was most used by ancients to stimulate lust, with crimson and scarlet close seconds. "Though your sins be as scarlet; though they be red like crimson" expressed the extremes of sin that God

cleanses from if people come to him in repentance. As normal sex relation is the highest and noblest human one, its perversion is the meanest sin. Enticement of others in such direction is most contemptible. Rouge and lipsticks are the invention of whores, whose steps take hold on hell and whose houses are ways to hell. Many follow the fashion with their faces and lips who do not know the real meaning of it. But they should obey God's command to modesty even when not fully understood. They know that he understands and has good reason for the commands. When willing to obey they will begin to understand. "A good understanding have all they that do his commandments." The use of lipsticks has a physiological bearing that is properly described only in medical or other special works. Any girl or woman of any decency at all should abhor the coloring of her lips; for it is simply an advertisement claiming special sexual vigor—a harlot's invitation. It belongs to and with the "scarlet woman" and the "red light district". The same evil is back of the common remark that a man's red necktie is "sporty".

Bobbing the hair was formerly practiced by harlots as an advertisement, and, until lately, any bobbed woman was regarded with suspicion. Some say that this is all there was back of Paul's remarks about bobbed hair in his letter to the Corinthian Christians, so having no application now when bobbing is the prevailing respectable fashion. But this is only a prejudiced guess in the defense of a stupid and loose (emancipated!) practice. Paul cited nature and the Creator as opposed to bobbed hair for women, and (see 1 Cor. 11:16) said that there is no place for argument with any who might wish to contend for it. The custom of all churches of God was against bobbing, and that custom was not to be trifled with; for it was the direct order from the Head of the



Church who is not fickle but who acts in eternal integrity of truth. Accordingly, any church that now lets its women bob their hair is not a church of God. As it substitutes human notions for divine doctrines, it is only what Jesus Christ (founder of the true church, so quite competent to judge) calls a vanity or humbug.

When ancient Roman wives were unfaithful, their hair was bobbed by legal requirement as a sign of the disgrace. Now our pretentiously cultured and Christianized women glory in their so-called liberty to imitate ancient pagan shame! And so-called Bible Institutes turn out bobbed women to be missionaries to the heathen—to teach the Bible which they, themselves, treat with contempt where it fails to fit their fancies! O the times! O the manners! Roman harlots were required to dye the hair red or yellow as a sign. Of course our American bobbed beauties in shorts and lipsticks never stoop so low as to dye or even bleach the hair! That might be mistaken for imitation of a Roman hetæra! As an ancient writer said, "The love of ornament has degenerated to wantonness." Zeno, the philosopher, in describing a proper young maid, said:

Let there be the bloom of modesty, and an expression of firmness. But far from her be the wearisome trouble that comes from the shops of perfumers, and goldsmiths, and dealers in wool (now he would say silk), and that which comes from the other shops where women, meretriciously dressed, pass whole days as if sitting in the stews.

So there were Beautie Shoppes four-hundred years, or more, before Christ, and those who patronized them looked like whores on their job! Friend Zeno, there's nothing new under the sun—they look just like that in America today. Other ancient writers describe the wiles of women who, not having strength to force men, ensnare them by adornments that allure imagination and so incite passion. Nothing new under the sun, but see:

Much in contrast to this is the account of Perpetua, a young Christian woman who was killed in the persecution of about 200 A.D. She was tied up in a large net and thrown before a wild cow. When she had been tossed about a few times by the beast, her hair and garments were somewhat disarranged. Even under the confusion and distress she was mindful of modesty and quietly rearranged them. Then she was slain with the daggers of her executioners. How many young women now are so careful of their modesty? How many have any modesty? Where are they? They have quit going out anywhere, even to church. It would be a pleasure to meet them. Oh yes; it is only emancipation that the dear women are practicing. Some call it Christian liberty, but the freedom that Christ gives is in truth and righteousness, while liberty to disobey God and outrage modesty is a delusion from the Devil who deceives with plausible notions that make him seem to be an angel of light. Old-fogies and the Bible are sneered at. They do as they please now. Untrammelled with clothing or much of anything else but selfish conceit, not even with common-sense, they riot in the daytime. License camouflaged as liberty is running the race to ruin. Polite, educated, refined modern imitation (not to reprove too severely) whoredom *versus* pure in heart is the conspicuous order of the times. If some are wise enough to heed the plain words, they will be grateful in the Day of Judgment. They will not slap my face as a young female in Kentucky did her pastor's for such frankness.

#### PARTICEPS CRIMINIS

Pure hearted merchants do not deal in vice-encouraging articles of any kind. They do not advertise with any pictures of near-nudity to attract attention. Merchants who cater to the vanities, frivolities and lusts of people



cannot see God; for they are not pure in heart. Editors and publishers who put out literature that encourages wrong thinking are likewise impure in heart, and more—they are of Satan, tempting people. Publishers who advertise for others things that are wrong partake of the guilt. When professedly Christian publishers advertise heretical literature or speaking appointments by false teachers they are partners in the evil. When a church deacon sells infidel or trashy stuff from his book store he is a Judas. Many such inconsistencies occur everywhere. Nothing is plainer in reason and Scripture than that the guilt of *particeps criminis* attaches to all such conduct. Yet the plea of "business is business" (and, by implication, religion is only religion) governs many nominal Christians and some who make gesture of activity. Response to advice in this is likely to be denial or resentment instead of contrition, repentance and reformation. Any pure in heart, but ignorant, will welcome correction; for they want to do and be right. Let a publisher (in this country) make only a brief announcement of a lottery, he is punished as participant in the unlawful thing. Let a man sell the smallest item (even of food) to an enemy of his nation, or give him a night's lodging or shelter from cold or storm, he is treated as a traitor. This has nothing to do with our individual action toward personal enemies, wherein we are to be kind and generous. That has a different angle or bearing. Is not loyalty toward truth and virtue of equal and greater importance? Pure hearted publishers publish pure publications. Pure hearted book dealers handle only pure literature. So all along the business street. So prime a principle could hardly be overlooked except by minds blinded by the god of this world. But God searches hearts. In nothing is the guilt of *particeps criminis* so mischievous, yet so disregarded

generally as in having fellowship with false teachers in the face, too, of plain and emphatic warning and command in God's word. Ancient Jews were conspicuous in their contemptuous disobedience of commands to have absolutely no fellowship with idolators, astrologers or necromancers (spiritists) and magicians. Severe suffering and disaster resulted. Very strangely, in the full light of the New Testament, many flock to those same old delusions until Christendom suffers from cults of many colors variously named but all cut from the same piece of sham shoddy woven in the Devil's mills. All such cults thrive mainly on perverted church members who dabble curiously in the strange and pretentious literature, listen to lectures and attend meetings. The safe and proper way is to let all such things alone. Any encouragement or tolerance of false teachers is wrong, making us partakers in guilt. Emphasis needs to be put on 2 John 10,11 right now everywhere. When churches advertise in newspapers alongside similar notices of the false cults, they violate this law against fellowship with darkness. Inquiry shows them to be headed for ruin.

#### BIRTH CONTROL

Birth control? Reality, or pretense? We have to look at the thing because it is in the air challenging purity. We must look at its hideous impudence frankly because the daylight of truth in which we stand hides not, nor camouflages. We shall find that the controlers are doing the glossing. Man was made to control this world, but was unfaithful to the trust, and has let the world control him. Control means regulation, not defiance and perversion. If people are to control births, they must regulate the primary processes, not intercept them or interfere with them. If a farmer does not want a field to grow wheat, he is not such a fool as to sow the seed



is he? He controls his crops by practicing discretion in their management. He uses his brain. He does not scatter seed just for fun or because his mind itches for it, or lusts for it. Higher motives direct. In the family relation love, not lust, is intended to be the regulator of offspring as of other mutual interests. In New Testament teaching, the principle of love in self-control is to apply everywhere, including sex-expression. We are to be masters over appetites and passions, not slaves to them. Natural impulses have their use, but are not to be misused for mere pleasure. We are not to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts. That is deliberate indulgence, or intentional excess—a violation of nature and an insult to the higher life, as also to God. As we know, the function of reproduction is very sacred and its perversion into a mere sensual play—a sexual drama, a hypocritical performance—results eventually in both physical and mental torture. Disaster most horrible will come upon a people practicing contraceptive "birth-control." The testimony of the early church was that married people had such self-control as to remain apart except when deliberately wanting children. The apostle Paul did not enjoin such continence, but insisted on sensible and affectionate moderation in self-control of real piety, instead of yielding to mere lust of passion. See 1 Cor. 7 on this subject.

The word "affectionate" contains largely the solution of the whole matter. Love and lust are strongly differentiated and contrasted in the Bible, but are largely confused, even identified, in modern usage. Love is of the heart; lust, of the flesh. Love is steadfast; lust, impulsive. Love is considerate; lust, exacting. Love gives; lust grabs. Love thinks of effects on others; lust, only of self-gratification. Real love is not based on or controlled by sex considerations. The word for Christian

love in the Greek Testament is *agape*, which denotes a spiritual attitude of appreciation, esteem and affection voluntarily assumed and bestowed by deliberate choice. When husbands are told to love their wives, this term for a spiritual attitude was used, not *phileo*, which may have a merely psychical application. Where true love is, lust will not control, trying to hide its intemperate indulgence with contraceptive contrivances, making a brothel of the marriage chamber. The thing called love by novelists—the wild, capricious, magical, impetuous intoxication in the presence of an attractive person of opposite sex is not love at all, but is sex-storm or infatuation (sometimes something worse). Horace, the ancient Latin author, said that the pagan conception of love was only lust, passion. Modern paganism has the same ignoble attitude. It affects a Christian profession but has little of Christian life. Novelists (no real spiritual mind writes fiction, being of the truth) follow the old literary ways. Parents and teachers should direct young minds away from such literature. But most of them are addicted to the same perversion, so cannot properly guide the young—a pitiful shame. Most people are so perverted by reading novels written by silly dreamers that their conception of marriage is entirely distorted. A really fine young woman once refused a suit from a young preacher who was respectful instead of effusive and demonstrative. Sometime later she admitted that she wanted to say "Yes," but distrusted the offer because he did not grab her and kiss her—as the novels read. Years later she died a wiser old maid. The "love" of "literature" and of common life being mere lust, is fickle and its flame often flickers soon after marriage. True love lasts long and even increases with the years. Engagements should be restrained from all impulsive emotion of supposed love. They who love,



like those who believe, need not make haste. And an engagement should be held sacred and inviolate. Love is not flippant about engagements. In principle, they are the marriages. Pure pledges are permanent. The wedding ceremony is only incidental public confirmation of the engagement. Broken engagements are, in spirit or principle, virtually divorces, to be shunned as violation of fundamental integrity. Trifling with love is utterly contemptible, yet is so common that young folks "in love" are joked about. It is not surprising that marriage is being regarded much as a failure. A prominent man in a conspicuous Bible School published with gloating glee the story of his success in wooing and marrying a young woman whom he knew to be engaged to a minister. He persuaded her to break the sacred pledge. According to the Bible, that marriage was adulterous from start to finish. Yet that big Bible School, boasting its "Fundamentalism" and preparing men and women to "preach the gospel", instead of rebuking and dismissing such a bragging deliberate sinner, endorsed the thing by officially publishing the item and retaining the dirty officer until his death. Such an institution should be boycotted by all Christians.

If the sober and normal meaning of marriage and parenthood were half realized, there would be not even a pretext for artificial birth control. Better kill off the infernal novels and other misleading incitements to unholy marriage than to kill marriage integrity by resort to the proposed sham control which is not control but prevention by interference. Self-restraint is the only right way. All else is impure in origin and action. The claim that birth control is now generally practiced by the upper classes proves nothing, but checks with the age-long fact that virtue is with the meek and lowly. Birth control is not the new thing supposed, but is very

ancient. The new gesture is only to make prominent and respectable what has been secret and shameful. In outlining the evils of heathenism, the apostle Paul left some things blank, as too shameful to mention, though needing to be exposed for the protection of society. It is known that so-called birth control was one item, but differently named. From the first case recorded (back in Gen. 38:9,10) it has been called "Onanism", and big bold men have been ashamed to mention it in private. But now, in our evolved culture, comes a little demure female who, with tongue and pen, begs, beseeches, entreats, implores and prays the people; even presumes to browbeat or hoodwink Congress, to adopt, naturalize and coddle as a new-born discovery re-named scientific contraception the old disgusting trick that makes marriage a dirty dramatic farce, even a burlesque on plain harlotry. Bobbed hair, naked legs and contraception make a trio that tickles the unclean spirits that infest the air like radio advertisements.

The plea for birth control as a relief to over-population and defective population loses its show of virtue when the clinching argument in support of the scheme is the alleged present practice of the upper classes—a distinction not recognized by the impartial God. The motive of the upper classes in their own practice is not humanitarian. So if their practice is a basis for a law endorsing birth control, the alleged humanitarian propaganda is a fake. Claiming to be an emergency measure, but emphasizing the example of a non-emergency practice, the thing gives itself away—a scheme to make respectable a modified "scientific" Onanism. Back of the thing is a diabolical incitement that seems to the promoters as an angel of light offering a righteousness that will remove a big burden from humanity. But it is a delusion that will work more and wider disaster



than does even the reckless reproduction of poor, defective and diseased. The physical, mental, moral and spiritual ruin resulting from contraceptive action may not be so speedily manifest, but it comes as surely as ~~does~~ reaping follows sowing. Who sows to flesh reaps corruption; for God is not mocked, and he did not make man in his own image to practice Onanism in any way. The lowest animals are truer to their nature than that.

Marriage without offspring is a disgrace, excusable in case of unanticipated conditions of sterility. Deliberate interference in prevention of conception insults the Creator and the world, besides mocking both parties to the act. It is hypocrisy toward society and a disgrace to the community. Frank whoredom is less dishonorable (not more honorable, note). Our Lord approves voluntary surgery by males in emergency, but that precludes marriage. A certain religious cult that specializes the doctrine of the soon-coming of the Lord and confuses it with the destruction of Jerusalem when there was peculiar hardship for pregnant women, has an effective method of birth control. Some years ago it was told me by a minister having inside information that, in one of the several sanitariums of the cult, the married women members of that denomination were spayed, so they might escape the anticipated trouble of being with child when the Lord comes. Why the men were not also "doctored" was not reported, nor why both sexes should not practice continence. Perhaps the then living prophetess at the head of the cult of Ebionism had a special revelation by vision or voice, or both.

I dislike to put such matter in this book. But the dirty propaganda is now conspicuous, and corrective teaching is needed but too little given. Only mistaken modesty is silent in the face of insolent filth. We are discussing the fundamental principles of truth applied

to correct conduct. We find need of repentance (change of mind) in many things. There is considerable knowledge of the bare text of the Beatitudes, but very little comprehension of the meaning and application. The item of purity of heart is most emphatic, and should have our full consideration. When impurity as a foul and destructive miasma floods the mental and social atmosphere as now, crippling and killing even the religious agencies, it is no time for suffering modesty to be still and let the poison work unheeded or unrebuked.

Monkey morals are a logical result of monkey science substituted for the word of God. Monkeys, hyenas, dogs and depraved humans are the exceptions to pure sex-life on earth. The immorality of birth control by contraception and the impudent immodesty of women are among the inevitable fruits of present-day educational influences. Monkeys will be monkeys, and dogs will be dogs the world over. They resent any effort, even of ministers, to give reproof, admonition and instruction in modesty and purity. Disobedient pride in defiance of nature, man and God marks even the female scientific and self-expressive monkey-consciousness of our day. As God destroyed Onan, so will he destroy this nation if it practices birth-control as is being urged by human dogs that would better be shot than be allowed to propagate their impure doctrine. Pure hearts shrink with shuddering disgust at the filth now flung so broadcast with "scientific" snarls against Christian purity and integrity. People, beware. Congress, beware.

#### DEFILED RELIGION

When James explained what pure and undefiled religion is, he implied the existence of impure and defiled religions. What was true then is true now. If people would investigate (obey Jesus' word "ask, seek, knock") they



would soon find that modern religion is largely defiled. A large book could not fully present this subject, so it may be barely touched in a few points pertinent to our general subject. Defiled religion does not necessarily mean immoral religion, though much of such is in the world. Apostolic writings, including the letters to the Asian churches of the Apocalypse, exposed some of the early corruptions. The situation has become worse as the "mystery of iniquity" developed boldness. People evidently want it so; for few will read books put out to expose and protect from the evils. Veritable synagogues of Satan (so designated by our Lord) abound in America today. Delusions of psychism and spiritism trend to the carnal. Spiritism, especially, in various forms, including Theosophy and Pentecostalism (with its "tongues") tends to "free love".

We pass this now to notice another phase of defiled religion. Purity has more meaning than clean morals. We speak of pure foods, pure drugs, pure breeds, meaning simple, original, unmixed kinds. Pure religion is the original, simple, true way of living with reference to God, unmixed with any added notions. Mixed piety is called fornication and adultery in the Bible, as being infidelity in sacred relations and pledged obligations, and its spiritual havoc is awful. So our attention is now directed briefly to religion as it is being defiled by other than original truth in the simplicity of Christ. The simple elemental truth is indicated in 1 John 3:23:

This is his [God's] commandment: That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

Whoever keeps that commandment, John adds, dwells in God and God in him. This is the supreme attainment—so simple, yet utterly ignored and repudiated in the world. Indeed, it is almost unknown in Christendom

because people are so blinded and stupefied by many notions invented by men and devils. "*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*" was the sufficient and efficient original Christian creed. What worked with the apostles works now where people have sense enough to hold to the New Testament instead of to church councils with their medley of voices, and to other confusing agencies. It is a peculiar comment on human perversity and susceptibility to delusive fancies, that so many ignore the plainest Scripture and take up with fanciful and stupid interpretations or alleged new and supplementary revelations. The Devil says that the last word has not yet been spoken (revealed) in religion, and people bursting with new ideals take up the glad refrain attuned to their own discoveries or hobbies. It is, however, insisted in the only authentic and genuine text-book of Christianity (the New Testament) that the final revelation of truth was made through the apostles appointed and equipped for the purpose. No further revelation is to be expected or admitted. The everlasting gospel forever settled in heaven cannot be added to or amended. Attempt to modify or pervert it even by an angel from heaven calls for positive execration. So some up-to-date modernists, notwithstanding their D.D. and Ph.D. adornments, along with ancient corrupters must go to hell (Gal. 1:8,9). To know God in Christ is the supreme attainment, and that knowledge is completely available in the New Testament. If any fail to attain, it is from their neglect to ask, seek, knock at that storehouse of divine wisdom.

We should particularly bear in mind that God keeps his promises. His promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him has been kept; for salvation came through the Jews. *No revelation ever came or can come from God through a Gentile.* This refutes all



modern twaddle about the New Testament being only a compilation of traditions and scraps of philosophy from many countries. It also disposes of the claim of Rome to have the right to change and add to church ordinances or doctrines. It denies any council or congregation the privilege of meddling with anything the Head of the Church appointed through his ambassadors plenipotentiary, the apostles, even in the matters of divorce, birth control or woman's place in society or in the church. *There never was a gentile apostle.* The pretense to apostolic succession is as stupid and presumptuous as is popery or the pretense of women to healing authority and power (Jesus never appointed a woman to heal). Christianity did not come through Gentiles, but only to them. All claims to revelations made by Gentiles are spurious. When Cornelius prayed for light no truth was revealed to him, but he was directed to send for the apostle Peter. History staggers with the ruin wrought by revelations to people who were victims of false revelations from deceiving devils, without heed of express warning in Scripture. The most conspicuous and pretentious delusion of this kind now claiming the spot-light bears the doubly false title Christian Science whose founder was both a woman and a Gentile, conditions positively excluding from apostolic functions, in addition to other considerations. Mrs. Eddy's claim of "discovery" of her religion veils the claim to having a revelation, which claim was made, however, in asserting that she was only a scribe recording in her book the words of God as its author. Question:- Why so many revisions of a book from God?

God's word is yea and amen in Christ Jesus, that is, definite, positive, sure. To modify it is to corrupt it. A Platonist who changes his philosophy is no longer entitled to call himself a Platonist. They are dishonest

who call themselves Christians after changing the pure gospel of Christ (corrupting or defiling it), whether they are Modernists, Fundamentalists, or just Heretics. The New Testament repudiates the things most conspicuous in Christendom, so impure and defiled have commandments of men made religion, instead of the simplicity of Christ. Priestcraft, ecclesiasticism, episcopacy, ritualism, calendarism, partyism—all such things contradict the fundamental and vital principles and specific, even emphatic, doctrines of Christ.

Ancient Jews were not alone in the mischief of exalting human fancies above divine laws. Stressing fences around the Law was the big piety of Jewish leaders as they disregarded the Law itself. Jesus did not tolerate that, but denounced it as sham and hypocrisy. What is his opinion of the piety of people who now dismiss from thought and practice the essential principles of righteousness, and exalt human inventions? The first word of Christ today is "Repent"—change your minds about what is truth; what is life; what is religion; what is duty; what is goodness; what is destiny. He says that the Kingdom of Heaven is the realm, or sphere, of the eternal—the real, vital, essential, perfect. Ancient Rabbinism was a burlesque on real Judaism. Modern ritualism is a perversion of Christianity. A significant trend of this day is to more ritualism. Much is said about beautifying the service in churches. For whose benefit? Who needs it? Who calls for it? God does not. Spiritual people do not. Carnal people do not worship in spirit and in truth. The Head of the Church does not call for it. The Holy Spirit, appointed director of all true church programs, does not. "Let all things be done unto edifying" not for entertaining. The beautifying proposition is made by unspiritual persons who have a form of religion but deny its power. The call for any



beautifying of the service is plain denial that there is power in the forms—effectiveness is expected from the proposed embellishment. In other words, the worship is not directed to God but to the audience—nothing but a dramatic entertainment, a humbug and hypocritical performance. Theological schools are unloading such trash into our pulpits with the star performers labeled D.D., Ph.D. The apostle says not to cater to such stuff but to turn away from the actors of the show, so our language is not unbecoming. People who brag that their culture has lifted them above the revelation of God in Christ and illumined into glorious radiance by the Holy Spirit in the apostolic writings, yet who have the effrontery to pose as Christians, deserve not only criticism but condemnation, if not execration.

Lust of the eye has been a leading fault with human beings ever since deluded Eve saw that the forbidden fruit tree was pleasant to the eyes. So urgent and exacting is the wish for beauty, that it is introduced and cultivated even in inappropriate places and circumstances. It is used not only to please the fancy, but also to disguise the disagreeable. So pervading was the notion of beauty as an attraction, that it was made the conspicuous item in ancient pagan worship. Temples and ceremonies were ornamented as though beauty was the principal consideration. In providing a religious service for Israel (so long familiar with and somewhat influenced by elaborate Egyptian ceremonies) God accommodated ("winked at" is the Bible term) this view until a better way could be provided after the Spirit of truth came to enlighten and purify minds and hearts. So the Temple and its services (no pattern for us as is supposed by some) were elaborate and gorgeous (for a psychic effect on carnal minds), but quite different from those of heathen religions.

For a long time the early Christians were misunderstood and suspected of atheism because they had no temples, altars, images, vestments, prayer-books or any pompous ceremonies, not even pageants or processions or choirs. When Christianity became popular because of Emperor Constantine's patronage and protection, so that unspiritual people assumed leadership, a marked change was effected until the formerly simple meetings became ornate and pompous both in equipment and in ritual. Such carnal conditions have continued in varying degrees modified by partial reformations in places. Now the trend is toward the corrupt high-churchism that mocks the very name of the simple Christ. Entertainment of the senses and fancies is the emphasis, while spiritual attitudes are dormant or dead. So superstition is growing even in churches professing to be free from the corruptions of the Dark Ages, but glossed by modern psychism mistaken for the rational and spiritual. Man-made ceremonies take the place of spiritual worship so that, as Jesus said, the worship is vain, empty—a humbug without influence toward righteousness or virtue or holiness of truth. Thus the futility of our multiplied religious agencies to uplift and correct the degenerate conditions of the day. Because people want to be tickled (entertained) instead of improved, God lets them have the delusions of psychism that parade as improved religion.

The Greeks and Romans were not only surprised and mystified, but were even angered, by the utter simplicity of Christian worship. They were even afraid of it, not knowing what occult influences might come from such strange worship of an invisible deity (no idols being present). They decided it to be a strange new mania dangerous to the government. Hence the persecutions with a view to exterminating Christianity. And today?



How many in the most professedly Christian community will attend simple meetings without "special music" or "vested choirs" or other dramatic folderol, but only for spiritual interests? No adding machine is needed for preparing the report. *Religious* things are tolerated, but *spiritual* ones are not welcome. Steepled and dedicated buildings, stained-glass windows letting through a "dim religious light" but excluding God's own sunlight, pipe organs, gowned "priests", flags, pictured "passion-plays" and other "pious" contraptions are acceptable, but the real God and his spiritual worship are not wanted; for only the spiritually-minded can appreciate them. We stress this item because of the prevalent ignorance on the subject and to stimulate investigation. The church *must* be purified before Christ can receive her as his own.

Ritualism has no spiritual power. God looks at the heart, however lowly. He disregards ceremonies, however gorgeous. Right hearts need no ritual. The early church used none. Spontaneous extempore worship is what God appreciates, as it comes direct from sincere hearts. An early writer of Christian apologetics said that prayer was offered without a monitor (prayer-book) because from the heart. Songs were often improvised on the occasion. After the church had become popular enough to receive into membership unspiritual nominal believers rituals were introduced. At first they were restricted to occasions when no prophet was present to lead devotions. In those days some were under special inspiration to act as guides in the development of the churches—a temporary expedient, as the apostle Paul explained. So the occasional use of a prayer-book was a confession that the Holy Spirit was not acting. Instead of responding to the Spirit, the churches cultivated ritualism. Propositions to beautify the service are just a gesture toward Romanism—a sure sign of the absence

of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, and truth is not confined to fixed ceremonies. Truth makes free in mind. Truth is alive; it smothers in a ritual. This is not to say that all non-liturgical societies or meetings are spiritual. The mystery of iniquity has brought out many imitations of the spiritual. Ritualism had a place in the old dispensation, which was not a spiritual one, but was adapted to current conditions. Cultivation of ritualism now means substitution of the psychical for the spiritual—a great defilement of true religion and a repudiation of Christ and his work.

Eternal truth has no relation to time, place or earthly limitations. Since the incarnation, redemptive death, resurrection and ascension of the Son of God, and since the coming of the Holy Spirit, the world and the fulness thereof belong to God in a special sense beyond the relation in creation. Redeemed and reconciled, the lost and fallen world is lifted into very special relations to the spiritual realm. This earth is all sacred now, not just in spots. Not Christian, but Jewish, is the talk of Palestine being the Holy Land; Jerusalem the Holy City; Jordan the Sacred River. Some especially Holy Men who wear Vestments on their Names (which neither Peter, James, John, nor Paul, obeying the Master, did) are still so ignorantly or stupidly superstitious as to carry bottles and jugs of Holy Water dipped from the muddy Sacred (properly so regarded under ancient conditions, but not now in any special sense) Jordan back to America for use in what they call baptism, but which is made only a neat little religious drama. Have they never read "A time is coming, and now is, when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father"? Only one thing could be meant by this—an abolishment *forever* of localism in religion. This applies both to place and time, as Paul emphasized, saying that



failure to observe it is repudiation of Christ. Notions of the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem as a part of the kingdom program contradict this and also other plain Scripture. Some people read with veils over their eyes and hoods over their heads, yet claim to be wiser than others. The most stupid and hopeless people are those who are so conceited in their ignorance that they will not investigate or listen like little children whom our Lord commends. Christ's work was in and through the Eternal Spirit. Where the Spirit is there is direct communion without restriction of place, time or manner—ritual is a hindrance, not a help. To rebuild the temple in Jerusalem would insult Christ, putting him to public shame as being a failure. It would be a return to the "weak and beggarly elements" of Judaism that Christianity displaced and superceded.

In Christ all life relations, conditions and activities are as religious as prayer. "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" makes hod-carrying and house-cleaning as sacred as preaching and praying, when it is in order to carry a hod or clean a house. Who prays sincerely works faithfully. Who acts dishonestly prays hypocritically, if at all. Doing good is the best of praying. "Not everyone who *says* to me 'Lord, Lord' but he who *does* the will of my Father who is in heaven." A part of that will is for everyone to be faithful in the work at hand. The will of God is not varied by time, place or ritual. All days are holy, not one day in seven only. All places are holy, not Palestine only. There is no "Holy-of-Holies" in any building since the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom. To pretend that the "amen corner", the chancel, the "altar rail" or the front seats are better than other places in a church building is a heathen superstition that insults the Holy Spirit who is everywhere. The notion that sinners must

"come forward" to "get saved" is not only false, but grossly and disastrously misleading. It entirely misrepresents the way of salvation, contradicting the New Testament and giving a wrong direction to Christian living. The best to be said of it is that it is psychical. But sixty years of experience, observation and study warrant my statement that much of such religion is a delusion from the deceiver who, as an angel of light, is busy as a "revivalist" or "evangelist" perverting, corrupting, defiling the Christian religion. Back of these words is a mass of evidence to fill another book. The thing is startling, but all truth is startling in a world largely hypnotized by Satan's devices.

Less truth, more ceremony; shorter sermons, more dramatic ritual; less doctrine, more poetry; less stirring of mind, more lulling of conscience, is the order of the hour. The apostle did not just guess when he wrote:

The time will come when they will not endure the healthful teaching; but, having itching ears (æsthetic sense), will pile up (accumulate) to themselves teachers according to their own desires (individual notions, so the many teachers); and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto myths.

This rendering brings out better the force of the Greek text of 2 Tim. 4:3,4. The situation was to develop in Timothy's time, but the description fits our day—a reversion to pagan emphasis on the visible. Christianity emphasizes faith as the intellectual and spiritual apprehension of the unseen eternal. Modern emphasis on visualization is a move toward idolatry. Pagans taunted the early Christians with being ashamed of their God because they kept him concealed—an idol too hideous to show! Spiritual worship seems too plain and ugly to our cultured offsprings of monkey tree-climbers who hopped and lolled as they *felt* impelled, and as glimpses of material goodies appealed. When fancies of flesh and eyes, with pride of performance, direct worship the



result will almost scare the Devil. Such is the trend of defiled religion today—yes; defiled, corrupted, perverted, *spoiled*, spotted by the flesh. Octavius, in the third century, replied to an insulting infidel in a way to shame our beautifiers of the service by sensuous gewgaws. He wrote with spiritual insight and understanding, thus:

But do you think we conceal what we worship, if we have no temples and altars? And yet what image of God shall I make, since, if you think rightly, man himself is the image of God? . . . Were it not better that he should be dedicated in our mind, consecrated in our heart? . . . Therefore, he who cultivates innocence supplicates God; he who cultivates justice makes offerings to God; he who abstains from fraudulent practices propitiates God; he who snatches man from danger slaughters the most acceptable victim [animal offering]. These are our sacrifices, these are our rites of God's worship; thus, among us, he who is most just is he who is most religious.

Soliloquy:- Why are people in these enlightened times generally so stupid in religion as not to see the wonderful truth so clearly recognized by early Christians from reading the same Scriptures with less education? The answer involves too much for a place here. It is worth while to investigate, giving big returns.

Real Christianity is little known today, being hidden under a maze of man-invented contradictions. When a corrective hint is received, it takes a long time to work it out because of the stubbornness of prejudice. Right now is a good time to get busy asking, seeking, knocking at God's door of truth. Simple minds sometimes see deeper, farther and clearer than stronger ones that are befogged by prejudice. I know an unschooled rustic in a hidden southern cove whom no accuser would call a Christian, but who has some ideas though no ideals. A more puritanic neighbor upbraided Jim for going to fish in a near-by river on a Sunday. His responding inquiry was whether it was worse than a man's letting his wife go out to gather wood for the breakfast fire

while he loafed in the house, and then grumbled at the breakfast. And he asked whether it is worse to go to the river to catch a fish on Sunday than to go into the garden and dig a mess of potatoes for the Sunday dinner. In his more than rustic simplicity he shamed many pretentious Christians whose piety is that of ancient Rabbinism. Other things not considered, the Sunday fisher would go to heaven ten times when the grouchy loafer would not go half way to the gate. The whole list of rabbinical church "holy days" is a contradiction of Christ. As such, they are very unholy days—the worst of the year. The defiled religion of Ebionism is just the humbug so much denounced in the apostolic writings. The unnatural thing must be destroyed before the shout of victory over Babylon can rise.

Repeating for emphasis what has been said before, and because it fits here, not Christian, but rabbinical, are many practices, such as carrying tiny crosses or crucifixes, sprinkling "holy-water", wearing vestments, use of affectedly pious voice (intoning ritual and Scripture readings), ritual genuflexions, wearing uniforms and badges, carrying banners and flags, supposed piety in carrying pocket Testaments (under bondage of pledge, which is contrary to Christ), Bibliolatry (regarding the Bible as a book in a superstitious way like fetichism, attaching importance to knowing how many chapters and verses it has; which is the middle verse, the longest and shortest ones, all of which is only man's invention; how many times any certain word is used, as proving the importance of a doctrine). Such puerile superstition is emphasized as Christian culture in young people's societies of the churches and even in big Bible Institutes that profess to prepare people for peculiar proficiency in preaching and promoting proper popular pious programs. And there is the calendar piety that celebrates



anniversaries of this, that and the other odds-and-ends, like Christmas, Easter, Lent, Good Friday, Whit-Sunday and their associates; Mothers' Day, Decision Day and Other Days; even anniversaries of birthdays, dedication days and pastors' installation days, with other nonsense excluding attention to spiritual matters. Apparently, neither pastors nor people ever read Gal. 4:9-11 and abundant cognate Scripture. As Rabbinism was a slur on Judaism, so is this defiled religion a slur on Christianity—an offspring of the harlot of the seven hills.

Some make a virtue of shouting, especially in meetings. Let those shout who will, but let them not make a virtue of it; for it is only a notion and may express mere psychical or carnal emotion. Let them not judge non-shouters to be without the Holy Ghost, as shouting Methodists used to do; as "Pentecostalers" now judge people to be without the Spirit who do not "speak in tongues" (as they suppose). Such demands contradict Scripture and show delusion or fanaticism. Appeals to the Old Testament in favor of shouting show ignorance of the situation which alters the case. Jews were a carnal people, while Christians are spiritual. God is for order in meetings, not confusion, says Paul. When the Spirit hovered over the chaotic world, he brought order and system. In the churches and in individual hearts the Holy Spirit brings peace and quiet, not tumult or noise. Heart attitudes and their spontaneous expression in conduct are the gauges of spiritual conditions, not showy demonstrations—stage-play. Hurrahs may do in political frienzies and dramatic excitements, but their fickleness is notorious in history. The voice that shouts "Hosanna" today may yell "Crucify" tomorrow.

The requirement to kneel in prayer (before noted) is a contradiction of the liberty of spirit we have in the sonship of Christians who are not under constraints of

ceremonies but act voluntarily. Recent action of the Methodist General Conference stressed the kneeling ritual. That denomination professes to follow the Bible only, but there is no such regulation in the Bible for Christians. What is the logical conclusion? This well illustrates the tendency to make mere human notions emphatic above what God requires or even intimates—just old Rabbinism that destroys real piety.

#### PURITY AND FREEDOM

Purity from mixture with different and contrary things cannot be emphasized too much in religion. By object lessons God sought to impress this on the Jewish mind in the old dispensation, with only partial effect. Some of the ceremonies and inhibitions were to make Jews socially distinct from heathen neighbors as help against moral and religious contamination. Unmixed materials for clothing, distinction between foods as clean and unclean, discrimination in days and seasons—such things had only temporary use in elementary training, but were discarded when Christ reconciled all things unto God. Retention of those rudiments means forfeiture of Christ's redemption, as so emphasized in apostolic writings. Not at all strange is the futility of current nominal Christianity that is not Christian in fact or in power. Nothing calls for repentance more than this.

As a sub-topic of perverted (defiled) religion we now consider purity as a freedom from bonds of imposed pledges. It is so important that Paul makes it a test of loyalty to Jesus Christ to stand fast in the liberty with which he set us free, not again being entangled in the yoke of bondage (Gal. 5;1). By this he means absolute freedom from Mosaism and all legalism. By this he condemns "blue laws" and excludes Prohibition from the list of Christian achievements. Mohammedans had



prohibition long ago, but it made nobody virtuous or good. Christ has a better way to real righteousness, and when his way is ignored and displaced by human legalism he is insulted and set aside. His work is scorned and his salvation from sin is mocked. Law never saved a soul, never can, never was intended to. Trying to make people good by laws and guns not only fails, but makes them worse, just as Scripture, history and the present experience of the United States proves. I am not defending the liquor business, but defending the gospel of Christ as the power of God unto salvation, and objecting to its displacement by violence. Some say that it was the failure of preaching that led to the Prohibition measure. To which the reply is that the pure gospel has not been preached here. The Puritan Pilgrims were not Christians, but Ebionites, as are their successors. Every vote for Prohibition was a vote against the Gospel, and every shot fired in the attempt to enforce legal Prohibition violates the Lord's command to use only the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, in fighting evil. For Christians to use any other weapon is to bring reciprocal violence—"they who take the sword shall perish by the sword." The unprecedented crime wave and violence now rampant confirms our Lord's warning. Every teacher of religion who advocates or endorses legalism as a promoter of virtue is a traitor to the Gospel of God in Christ. Such is the plain teaching of the New Testament read in daylight, not my word.

In the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" is the sentiment "He (Christ) died to make men holy; let us die to make them free." But Christ died to make us free before he could make us holy—free from the law of sin and death. Holiness is the quality of voluntary righteousness without constraint of law and penalty. It says "I delight (wish voluntarily and take pleasure in) to do

thy will, O God." But that is impossible to unregenerate man under law. "You must be born again." Natural man is reluctant and evasive toward right, even resentful and hostile. Paul explains that legalism is against us and Christ took it away, nailing it to his cross. In place of law is regeneration, without which is no real righteousness; for God looks on the heart out of which are the issues of life. Forced, pledged, bargained obedience has no spiritual character—it is mere servitude in bondage, not free and glad sonship. Christianity means sonship or nothing. Without that it would be a superfluous and useless scheme; for the old regime had all possible qualities of legalism, and was a failure, just as Scripture explains. Christ redeemed not only from sin but also from the law, without which redemption there could be no sonship. See Gal. 4:5, noting the "that we might". Those who prate of God's universal fatherhood regardless of the cross of Christ are simply blind and stupid fools. Sons are not under laws of prohibition but follow the principle of expediency, doing what circumstances indicate. Self-control and moderation are safe guides for true Christians, and no church has any right to impose detailed regulations.

Legalism spoils the glad service of sonship. It is a worse enemy of the gospel than are atheism, infidelity and materialism combined, because so deceitful with a confidence in a false righteousness. Remember the Pharisee who told God how good he was because he kept the formal requirements. God did not dispute his claim, but plainly intimated that he regarded him as a dirty scalawag, a hypocritical humbug. A young man (married) who belonged to the young people's society of a church and taught in the Sunday school confessed to me that he and the other members made the social gatherings only opportunities for cultivating carnality



between the sexes. Not saying that this is the general practice, we may use the case to illustrate the uselessness of pledged pious practices in making righteous. It is strange how many church people either do not read the apostolic epistles at all, or with eyes shut to their most emphatic points. They were written to be used.

"I was glad when they said unto me 'Let us go into the house of the Lord'" was sung by a Jew in the gloom of shadowy worship. "I pledge to attend meetings of the Young Folks' Religious Society whether I like it or not, and to take some part besides singing—if I can't find some excuse that I think Jesus would accept" signs (in substance) the modern young Christian joiner in the glare of gospel light (veiled from his eyes by rabbinic perversions). Yet a preacher wrote a book purporting to prove that the religious movement among the young people was a new Pentecost! It is not Christian, but rabbinic—a device of man, an unspiritual man. What can be expected of churches replenished by a generation so misguided? Here, too, the call is to repent.

"The truth shall make you free." Note that. Any element of bondage is not of truth. It may not be in open falsehood, but is likely to wear a mask of seeming truth—the Devil's righteousness. Oaths, pledges and all binding exactions are not of truth, which has no need of such. Those who are of truth are sincere and dependable. Coersion is contrary to Christ. He says that all oaths are wrong; that whatever is added to simple affirmation or negation is of evil, so not of truth. Then societies that exact pledges or oaths from initiates are not of truth, but of evil, however innocent or pretentious their names or claims. No church has the right to demand pledges from members to attend meetings or to dictate what shall be done in them, but leave free to the leading of the Spirit of truth—the *leading* of the

Spirit, not the driving. This is an emphatic item. God does not compel. Ancient prophets were not under control as are spirit mediums, but acted freely under the inspiration (which does not mean dictation) of the Holy Spirit. When some (not all) early Christians spoke in tongues they were not under compulsion, but used discretion in exercising the special gift. One of the sure proofs of the diabolical source of the modern "tongues" movement is the emphasis put on it, with the fact of a positive control of voice by an abnormal power. Voluntary action characterizes the Christian way in all things. "Let every man give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly, nor from compulsion; for the Lord loves a cheerful (hilarious in the Greek) giver" knocks out all church assessment constraint, and condemns the devilish forcing of contributions to community chests now practiced. Some over-pious people say that we should pray God to tell us just how much to give on any occasion. But that is very unchristian, being of Spiritism in which devotees run to mediums for advice in every little matter. It is an affront to the intelligence God gives for guidance. Too much of old pagan superstition has been retained in what is commonly mistaken for Christianity. Feelings, hunches, fancies, sentiments, are misused as supposed promptings from the Holy Spirit. Horrible havoc has resulted from this delusion, which is a relic of heathen augury guidance. When preachers are blind in this, what can be expected of their people? As pious and intelligent a man as John Wesley was a victim of the delusion, and his followers in multitudes, not to mention the many of other sects and independents. Details would fill a big book.

"If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." It is insult to sons of God to dishonor their spontaneous integrity by the imposition of oaths or pledges to assure



sincerity. Born-again men are God-men (super-men) and should be treated as such, and should act as such. Reversion to law is what Paul says is falling from grace. The pure in heart are blessed in true freedom. Heart piety is what God recognizes, not word pledges. Pious words are not heard in heaven unless from pure hearts. Heaven's radio uses spiritual adjustments.

#### PURITY AS INTEGRITY—SINCERITY

Belief in the existence of God is the basis of all true piety, and faith in his integrity is the prompter to obedience and to aspiration (Heb. 11:6). Stress on faith is decidedly rational. Only a blind stupidity thinks faith to be contrary to reason—faith, not credulity. Faith is the expression of sincerity reaching out to and for the original and ultimate Real. Motive, attitude of mind, is the essential element, the supreme consideration. But it must be expressed in action, in accomplishment. A religion of "intention", only, is a farce. Faith directs intention, so is the moral gauge. "According to your faith be it unto you."

Words sometimes belie profession and expose evil hearts. The vilest talker I ever heard was a member of a church and leader of the choir, but was not pure in heart. Another man, who could repeat long passages of obscure Scripture, a Sunday school superintendent, boastful of his piety and goodness, was very profane in private conversation, a loose exaggerator and liar, and the worst hypocrite in his community—not a pure heart. God is not fooled by the glibbest lip-piety, nor is man very long. Sincerity is the root of all goodness.

What has been said about purity in its usually recognized meaning is true and timely, but the underlying principle throughout is integrity, fidelity, sincerity, un-mixed consistency. When we look at the Greek word

for "pure" in this Beatitude we find it to mean not only freedom from stain, but also freedom from mixture—unadulterated, genuine, honest, sincere, real. Integrity is the innermost element of the Divine Nature—truth, genuineness. "I AM THAT I AM" is God's special and exclusive name—the absolutely unchangeable One. It is impossible for God to lie or to contradict himself and he hates a lying tongue. All who love or make lies are excluded from heaven. Single-mindedness, loyalty to truth, sincerity, are necessary in those who would see God. Such are "blessed", partaking of immortality. This most emphatically contradicted the prevailing notion of piety when Jesus first preached the Kingdom of Heaven. Hypocrisy was common. Real sincerity was little known. Pretense was everywhere. With their lips in ritual service people worshipped God, but their hearts were far from him. Modernly stated, they capitalize every pronoun referring to God, jerk the knee at the name of Christ in repeating the Creed, solemnly chant the Ahmen, observe Ash Wednesday, pay for a pew in the Church of the Holy Comforter, and also brag, strut, quarrel, cheat, swear, fight, et cetera! The double-mind is blind—unable to see or appreciate real godliness. It cannot recognize truth. The double-minded cannot see God. Simple integrity is an absolute requisite for really knowing God. He is not to be seen by the physical eye but by spiritual perception, which only the pure (sincere) in heart have. Mere information in the mind, that can be recited parrot-like makes no real scholar. Much less is one a real Christian by having mere information of doctrines, even with ability to teach them from pulpits. Truth, to be effective, must be in the heart.

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect (entire, whole, undivided) toward him.—2 Chron. 16:9.



But even sincerity may be freakish and perverted in application; for the heart is deceitful above all things. Old-time Japanese would not paint their houses because it contradicted nature. A street-car motorman said he could not become a Christian because his occupation required Sunday work. A "holiness" zealot thanked God that no pipe-organ defiled the place of meeting, and then sang as a solo a religious song, with his wife playing an accompaniment on a fine reed-organ. A prominent psychiatrist said that public whores are the most conscientious persons in some things. Books have been written showing the peculiar experiences of people who try to be faithful to unusual convictions and supposed divine promptings. Safety requires that zeal be according to knowledge, not according to feeling (impression or hunch), sentiment or opinion. That is a reason for the written word of God, attested to be such by many infallible proofs. It is up to us to develop a full understanding of that word of wisdom by diligent study in a receptive and responsive attitude, denying all personal preferences and sectarian prejudices. Knowledge and understanding are emphasized essentials throughout the New Testament, yet nearly all religious appeal is sentimental and psychical—Christian in name, not in fact. A Methodist "class leader" of a prominent church in a large city used to boast that he knew much about religion, but little about the Bible. He lost thereby an earnest seeker after God. Consult your imagination and inclination, not the Bible, is the up-to-date order—with as much integrity as a boat without compass or rudder. Quakerism's inner light is outdone; for it has some respect for The Book. Personal ideals (fancy, not knowledge and understanding) are now the fashionable authorities in religion. Bibles are still "best sellers" but what is done with them is another matter.

Integrity is impartial. Impartiality holds to truth as supremely important, *even when against party (sectarian) prejudice or personal preference*. "Be you, therefore, perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect" refers to impartiality, as the context shows. God, the supreme Truth, is the source and standard of right in thought and conduct, regardless of our ideals, which are very partial. A peculiar pseudo-integrity is often boastfully claimed in the statement that one is loyal to the truth "as God has given me to understand it". This puts on God the blame for any defect, perversion, distortion, fanaticism or other individualistic notion that may appear. It makes God to be a mere chameleon, changing his color to fit every mental condition met. It is only a stupid and impious way of claiming self-supremacy while pretending divine guidance. The frank claim for ideals is more honorable. Multi-colored opinions do not come from God, but from fleshly minds and deceiving spirits, as clearly explained in Scripture. The Spirit of Truth cannot give diverse opinions. Where he is accepted is unity. Our text-book (the New Testament) contains all we need and can use. It is not contradictory. When it says repeatedly that Christ reconciled man to God it nowhere says that he reconciled God to man—very contrary doctrines. Yet the Methodist sect says that the latter is the doctrine (unless the Discipline has been revised recently). Did God give Methodists to understand it so? And other doctrines are perverted not only by the Methodist sect, but also by others (only impartial statement, not in harshness against my mother church). Jesus plainly announced the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish regime, saying that all would occur in the time of that generation. Not a word in Scripture says otherwise. Yet certain who claim to be especially perfect teachers insist on a contrary doctrine despite



confirmatory Scripture and abundant historical records. They deliberately lie about the Greek original to make a show of wisdom in support of their heresy. Did God give them so to see the matter? We are responsible for how we handle the word of God. "Take heed how you hear" applies to reading, too. There is no excuse for handling the word of God deceitfully, yet it is done by men who set themselves up as fundamentalist leaders. Study, investigation, in simple integrity leads into full truth. Not mere cursory or occasional reading will do. We do not pick diamonds from the wayside as we speed along intent on something else. Nor can we gather the priceless gems of truth by a glance at the dusty covers of a Bible as we rush by to the table where a silly novel awaits our eager eyes, or to the door that opens the way to a theatre. The door of truth is opened only to such as are interested enough to stop and knock with full determination to have and to hold what is found, regardless of whether it fits our basket. "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you"—the most secret treasury of Divine Wisdom. It is worth while to have that door opened. No words can tell it. No brush can paint it. No music can interpret it. Only the spirit touched by the Spirit can recognize, appreciate and endure the glory of that Place and its Presence. Not just a schoolroom for a little while, but the Home of the Eternal into which the hungry soul is not only welcomed but adopted for eternal fellowship. It pays to "search the Scriptures"; for in them we find the way to and in eternal life.

But Bible study is worthless unless its teachings are practiced. "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." One reason for many failures in life by schooled people is that they merely tucked away what they learned, instead of putting it to use. I once had occasion to talk to a young man about certain digestive

processes, and the proper preparation of certain foods to correspond. Certainly, all right; he had learned it just so in school. He could have passed an examination on it. But it never occurred to him that it was anything more than a scrap of book-learning to help get a degree. So he suffered indigestion from eating fried food, not doing what he had learned from physiology. Just so is the Bible uselessly used, for most part. It supplies topics and texts for talkers, but even keen-eyed census takers would not fill many portfolios with lists of those who practice the principles it teaches. Another illustration of inconsistency is afforded by the action of a State which requires the Bible to be read daily in every public school and also requires emphasis on athletics, which contradicts the Bible and encourages the attitude that especially annuls Bible influence—pride and vanity. So with the school that professes a purpose to make every student perfect in Christ Jesus, yet teaches militarism!

Integrity, purity of heart, sincerity of purpose, does not offer or receive flattery. It uses no face paint or other disguise to impress or entice. It does not resort to tricks of elocution or dramatic play on emotions to sway an audience. The discourses of Jesus and of his apostles under direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit are the simplest possible unadorned statements of truth to the understanding (not imagination) and to conscience. Whoever makes a theatre of the pulpit is untrue to the fundamental meaning of Christian teaching, which is to inform the understanding for guidance of conscience. Entertainment is not a preacher's function. "Approving ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" is the apostolic pattern for preachers. The Greek original for "conscience" is very suggestive. *Suneidesis* indicates a state of mind which sees things in their true relations, so having a rational incentive to action. All



true Christian teaching does just this, so making plain the way of life. The confusion of thought throughout Christendom today is largely due to disregard of this teaching principle. Sentimental, dramatic, psychical preaching does not make clear the truth to the understanding, but confuses the imagination and excites the emotions—both dangerous incitements to action. This explains some of the mischief of modern so-called evangelistic or revival work, resulting largely in befogged superstition, not in intelligent Christian faith and practice. We should live in the Word, not by impulses.

Pure in heart, with single eye seeing truth in its one meaning and application, must we be to be immortal. Truth as it is in Jesus is not yes and no, but is yes and amen—the strongest way of emphasizing the inflexible and uncompromising fidelity to true Christian doctrine. The taunting cry of "Liberals" that Christians are so narrow, uncompromising, intolerant, is a compliment. It is one of the glories of truth that it is definite, fixed sure. It cannot be otherwise, but our understanding of it may be developed. It is as sensible to demand that a straight line tolerate crooks to please every whim as to demand that truth be flexible. "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points" cannot admit a corollary that a detour is just as good, even better—to please some stubborn geometrical infidel. Just as senseless is the demand that everybody's whims shall be given equal respect with attested Scripture. The way now is to exalt individual and group opinion above the word of God, thereby thinking to escape accountability to authority. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" is still true, though modern pride largely denies it, regarding the blood of Jesus an unholy thing.

The new expression of this freak piety of concession to every Tom-Dick-and-Harry religion is the round-table

meeting where all religions have equal voice (but where the alleged Christian delegates do the backing down while Pagans and others hold their ground). It is a merry thing, a delightful comedy, for the Devil's big family. Jesus held no round tables even with Jews, nor did the apostles with Gentiles. They could not be so stupid and disloyal to truth as to confer with falsehoods as to what they might or should teach, or how to teach. Certain foolish missionaries to India practice and extol the plan of not only letting, but inviting, unconverted heathen to dictate (in round table conferences) how and what to teach them for the Gospel! It is worse than a teacher of mathematics asking his raw pupils how and what they will let him teach for the Binomial Formula! Comparative religion is the big thing! The clamor is for a pooled religion, a rehash of the ancient eclecticism so characteristic of Gnosticism and allied cults. When a professing Christian concedes that comparison is in order, he admits his lack of confidence in Christianity and loses any power from his testimony—he is on the road to compromise. And compromise here means lack of integrity. It is a halt of opinion likely to be fatal, not because Christianity is unable to stand comparison, but because the concession implies an uncertainty that destroys the convincing power of straight confidence. "You are my witnesses" said Jesus to his disciples. So simple testimony has the convincing power of the Spirit of truth back of it, but a conference of comparison sits alone. Whom the Spirit of truth cannot convince with the truth no half-hearted apologist need expect to win. "Wisdom is justified of her children." They who are disposed to eternal life believe the simple words of the gospel. They do not haggle over comparative religion. Round-table preachers ignore the Holy Spirit as the convincing power in the plain word of truth.



Many are trying to play fast-and-loose with truth in the name of broad charity, but they will be disappointed. The Devil's righteousness says it is a fine thing to be liberal, tolerant, conciliatory, in the interest of universal brotherhood. God's righteousness says to be considerate and patient toward the ignorance, frailties and faults of men while trying to help them, but never to compromise in the faith and practice of truth. The modern trend is to concede that Christianity is a mixture of uncertainties, and that other systems of religion are the same, all being but guesses or adventures in evolving human consciousness modified by environment. This is a cheap conception of God by correspondingly weak minds—an interpretation of him as a mere projection of modern notionalism miscalled idealism, only a variation of the anthropomorphism that moderns so merrily ridicule. The eternal integrity of the real and rational God expressed (spoken) in Christ (the Word) is appreciated only by the pure in heart, the unmixed in attitude, the whole-hearted. Truth cannot mix with falsehood. Men may try to mix them, but only to smear the true without whitening the false. If such men were half as wise as they feel they would know that such flakes of approximate truth as they find in non-christian religions were borrowed and revamped from Christian sources. Even heathen writers long ago confirmed the apostle's statement that the gospel had been preached throughout the world in his day. Investigation has found that the alleged very ancient literature of India, even, contains many interpolations of later revamped Christian teachings. [See page 44 of my essay *The Indian Menace* for information on this]. Modern high-browed guessers would be wiser if they were to become investigators.

Every real Christian sincerely and fully holds that Jesus Christ is the complete and satisfactory revelation

of God. He is the Eternal Word expressed in terms of human life—made flesh and dwelling among men. The doctrine of the incarnation was a test of genuineness in the apostolic church. Any repudiation or modification of that as simple fact was antichrist. To deny the incarnate Son is to deny the supreme Father. This is yet fundamental in Christianity. But some are repudiating it while claiming to be Christians—blinded by the god of this world so as not to see the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ. For if they did they would not be trying to find God elsewhere. To seek God other than in Christ, is to repudiate him as in Christ, which is complete denial of Christianity. As there is salvation in no other, those who deny Christ even politely are lost. What, then, of round-table “seekers after God” who, in the very suggestion of seeking, repudiate the revelation of God in Christ, and propose to climb up some other way? Did somebody ever say anything about thieves and robbers? To rob Christ of his due is the meanest thievery—a display of modern wisdom! True faith accepts the following Scriptures without question:

To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

You will not come to me that you might have life.

Every man who has heard and learned of the Father comes

Every one who is of the truth hears my voice. [unto me.

No man comes to the Father but by me.

Much modern religious culture (affectation), including round-tableism, ignores these in doctrine and practice. No one can honestly claim to be a disciple of Christ (a Christian) while dabbling in any cult of antichrist, affiliating with any society that proposes to find God by any other direct or auxiliary way, or while attending round table meetings where all religions are given the same recognition as Christianity. Integrity is thrown to the winds in any such concession. Adding to Christ's reve-



lation of God is equivalent to repudiation of him as the way, the truth and the life. None can play double with God or Christ. "He who is not with me is against me." To fellowship with those who do not confess Christ, is to partake of the opposition (2 John 11). Some very serious thinking is due right here. We cannot both confess and deny Christ. We may not acknowledge him in the church and disown him on the street, or express a doubt by sitting at a round-table with infidel Jews, Mohammedans, Hindus and other unchristian religionists. The emphasis I am putting on this has a meaning that the wise will appreciate. Nor can a man be loyal to Christ and belong to any society, club or lodge that cuts the name of Christ from its ritual, even from such passages of Scripture as may be used—out of consideration for non-christian members, *thereby showing contempt for Christ and his followers while giving special recognition, concession and honor to the enemies of Christ!* If it is not treason for a professing Christian to participate in such a program, there is no treason anywhere. Yet many church members, including preachers, do that thing—and wonder why churches are dead. The Spirit of Life is not present where such a condition is.

Modernism makes a big botch of religion by its programs of comparative religion and round-table associations of contradictory religions. It is a queer mystery of mental action when educated men think that a medley of divine doctrine and human superstition is better than the pure teaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles. But worldly wisdom is blind to spiritual perceptions and values. The notion that Christ was not a direct revelation of God, but only a special development of human genius makes modernists mix all religions as being but varied expressions of the common heritage—very stupid philosophy. Big D.Ds. tell us that the horribly filthy

religions of India, the rottenest on earth and the vilest that unclean spirits have helped to invent, have important and valuable things to teach us stupid American Christians! [See *The Indian Menace* again]. Verily, such monstrosities from big theological schools are wolves in wool; devils in disguise. I can give names and places. "This is my beloved Son in whom I delight; hear ye him" totally and forever subordinates, and largely supplants, all other testimony regarding God than the teachings of Jesus Christ. Even Moses and Elijah, who were present (representing Law and Prophecy) were superceded. They talked about the crucifixion to take place soon, which signified that the death of Jesus was the end of the Old Testament regime. The words "It is finished" say the same thing. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit (life, meaning, substance) of prophecy" is another way of putting it. The sorry plight of Christendom today is largely due to ignoring this important matter, in the face of the plainest teaching of the New Testament. It is high time for the churches to wake up. "Hear him." What Christ said about the supremacy of his words and his relations as mediator has all the authority in the universe. To set them aside for some other way to God is mockery and insult. To claim the name of Christ while at round-tables is plain treason.

#### DECEPTION—DRAMA

No surer proof of the fall of man is needed than is the ever-present trend toward falsehood, fancy, fiction and the whole brood of dirty birds—affectation, assumption, counterfeiting, deception, hypocrisy, misrepresentation, pretense, and all such things named in the Unabridged of both hemispheres. The father of lies deceives many into thinking that some of these are just natural conveniences and pretty playthings. He masked himself



as a friendly adviser when he talked to Eve, and he has improved on that until he appears as an angel of light and a preacher of righteousness, perverting and misapplying Scripture, even showing himself as Christ or the Holy Spirit or God the Father. This land of educated culture is crowded with cults originated and perpetuated by such diabolical influence of delusion. Masking in any form violates that simple, artless, normal child-mindedness without which it is impossible to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Make-believe, fairy stories, the Santa Claus myth and all such stuff are not normal to the child-mind, but are imparted by perverted elders. It is the spontaneous, unsuspecting integrity of the child's attitude that leads it to credit the false stories. Once started on the wrong path, its pursuit is sure unless an intervention rescues—and that not the common spurious conversion that merely puts the label "Christ" on heathen and devilish falsehoods, like calling a pagan festival of nature-worship "Christmas" and applying another (Easter) without change of the idolatrous name to commemoration of Christ's resurrection in face of the fact that the New Testament indicates only the Lord's Day (not the Sabbath, which has no place now). We might continue unto a long list of spurious piety, and the suggestions in this paragraph will give live minds volumes of thoughts we may not record here. But we may repeat the warning of the Master against misleading the little ones. If it were applied literally now the coast cities might suffer inundation from filling of the seas, and "birth-control" would lose its whine about the terrible prospect of over-population.

The pure in heart (the sincere) do not play with life in any of its phases or relations. They especially do not try to play or make-believe with religion or with God. He searches the heart. No tongue can fool him. Fine

"fronts" do not impress him. Outward appearances appeal only to carnal minds. This does not at all put a premium on slovenliness, as fanatics sometimes think. Nor does it put a premium on uniforms or vestments, as other fanatics fancy. God is no respecter of persons but of hearts disposed to do his will—the God-minded and the God-active. "As he thinks in his heart, so is he" [Prov. 23:7] is being much misquoted and misapplied by the impure in heart to make the Bible appear to endorse the notion that men evolve themselves by merely mental activity, thus denying need of regeneration or other help from above. "As a man thinks so is he" is the misquoted form—a deliberate perversion, so deceitful in purpose, marking the cause in which used as of the father of lies. Solomon warned against a certain "con. game" and called attention to the fact that the trickster's flowery talk should be suspected; for his real character was in his secret intent instead of in his nice manner and words. Over-suavity is always suspicious still, and the quotation from Solomon may not honestly be perverted to the use of "New-Thought" in its propaganda of psychical religion as a new gospel, but which is not new, being only a revamp of an ancient exploded philosophy which modern smart Alecks [no apology for the slang] are ignorant of while presuming or daring to offer a substitute for the gospel of Christ. Solomon probably knew what he meant to say as well as do the modern pretentious "New-Thoughters." In verse four he said: "Cease from your own wisdom." He surely did not contradict himself in verse seven by saying that a man makes himself by his own thinking.

When discussing pretense, the matter of the drama logically comes into consideration. We have already given it some attention in connection with another beatitude, where we anticipated its relation also to purity



(sincerity) of heart. Any full discussion is not needed here, but it is proper to emphasize the utterly unchristian nature of the drama. Originating as ceremonies of pagan mystery-worship, its appeal is not to the understanding, but to fancy and feeling—the duplex mother of superstition. Superstition has not the fidelity to truth that is called purity of heart in the beatitude. In the Dark Ages, the Roman Church encouraged dramatization of Biblical narrations in imitation of the pagan mysteries, even to the point of styling the performances "Mystery Plays." Christendom is still grovelling in the superstitions so thrust upon it that many think all efforts toward rational understanding to be heretical, yet it is the very thing emphasized in the New Testament.

Nothing in the universe is surer than the fact that the modern pretentious culture that chases dramatics even in religion is nothing but grease-paint on the face of actors who pretend to be Christians while sticking up their noses at the first element of discipleship—surrender of self to honest acceptance of and obedience to all the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. So dramatized [playing a bit on the word] have become modern minds that some say the Bible is largely drama, *therefore not authoritative*. Not being pure (sincere) in heart, they impute a like quality to God and his word—while ridiculing ancient Jewish anthropomorphism! So do they expect to escape all but their own wishes. So do they glory in their own shame; for it is a shame to repudiate their own sincerity, and more so to make out God to be only a playwright—a make-believe. Really, the present generation worships the idol dramaturgy, along with other idols. Claiming it to be improved Christianity, it is almost perfected diabolism—Satan in the role of an angel of light. But the Apocalypse—is that not drama? Some books try to so show. But they ignore the plain

statement in the first verse, that the revelation was signified (not dramatized) to John. Many who read the book disregard that statement and make a literal interpretation, which is also wrong. "Sign-i-fied" means that the things were presented by symbols. The sealed book, even, was full of pictures of a cartoon nature, so that only those having the key could understand. The drama notion does not fit the case at all. The sealed book was full of pictures of the nature of historic cartoons which John described. Being "in the spirit" he read from them their meaning as from talking movies, but left local applications for spiritual Christians to understand because unsafe to be specific during raging persecutions. Contrary to the peculiar notion of certain who claim to be special custodians of prophetic Scripture and assert the futurity of all beyond the third chapter, at least a large part of the book referred to conditions then present and soon fulfilled. [I say this after study involving the reading of two-hundred books on the subject]. In no way does the Apocalypse endorse drama. Much less is it a dramatic composition. The primary thing in drama is fiction, usually exaggeration for psychic effect. The word "drama" is not in the Book of God—Truth, Reality, Sincerity, Purity. The dramatic interpretation of religion suits the carnal mind; for it pleases the esthetic taste and the psychical bias while not disturbing the conscience with a sense of responsibility or obligation. The voice of imagination has no authority, and authority is the last thing that a generation of self-seekers acknowledges. Schooling in self-expression is a large incentive to current religious drama.

The word "hypocrite" is from the Greek for "actor" as a pretender. Pretense is the whole thing in drama, and pretense is excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven where integrity dwells. Sincerity is a condition of seeing



God. Imagination and acting are contrary to reality. Fancy and pretense are not of truth, so not righteous. Yet, from earliest childhood, people are taught to use imagination and pretense—in home, street, school and church. The effect of dramatics on actors is very bad. An element of unconscious (probably) insincerity, an inclination to make-believe, along with a vanity for being seen, give an impulse toward the stage. Glamor and excitement stimulate interest in the artificial life until it becomes a passion. Successful effort requires an actor to commit the mind to impersonation. Repetition and change develop unnatural and unstable character, with immoral trend. The peculiar association of sexes in dramatic activity along with this broken integrity and the inevitable enticements of intimate travel result in loose relations between actors and actresses, also between stage folk and people in places visited. There are some exceptions (but only some). Church people who attend theatres are in poor business enjoying and applauding the performances of probably whorish persons and encouraging the dramatic "art" that tends to make them such. I am not guessing, but know what I am saying. That "movie" dramatics are no better is plain from the numerous scandals at Hollywood.

Public schools teach dramatics and have theatrical shows, thereby cultivating a trend that makes some of the pupils take to the stage, usually resulting as here indicated. It would be as rational to teach the pupils how to make whiskey or how to be gangsters; for they are no worse morally and spiritually than theatricals. It would be more honorable; for the theatre is more subtle, and young folk do not suspect the trap they are running into. Even school dramatics are demoralizing sometimes, as can be proven. College dramatics are no more virtuous, but are not imposed on parents as by a

compulsory public school administration. The worst phase of college dramatics is that most such schools are doing the corruption in the name of Christian culture, deceiving all those involved. And what of dramatics in Sunday schools and young people's societies of the churches? Even preacher factories (rated theological seminaries, but stressing philosophy and psychology) train prospective pastors to develop dramatics among the children and young people. Claiming to be Christian, they do what contradicts the elemental teachings of Christ. Actors are not poor in spirit, nor serious-minded, nor meek, nor hungry and thirsty after righteousness, nor pure in heart. They are just opposite to these—affected, ambitious, pretentious, trifling, proud, eager to be seen and applauded, insincere. Schools and churches turn up their noses at the Beatitudes and spit in the face of him who uttered them, when they teach dramatics and train for the theatre. And they cause the young to stumble, which Jesus says deserves sure destruction. Any wonder that vice and crime riot so freely among the young today? Churches are doing the work of paganism while mumbling the apostolic creed, reciting the Our Father and chanting Te Deum. The days of the scarlet woman of the seven hills and her brood of unclean daughters that also mix Christianity, Judaism and Paganism, with a bit now of Moham-medanism, are nearing their end. The wise will repent and leave Babylon. A religiousness that makes people worldly and greedy for ungodly indulgences is humbug. Some years ago the brightest star of the sect claiming to be most Christian was pastor in a city where I then lived. He had been an actor, but repudiated that upon joining the church. In a public Y. M. C. A. address I heard him say about the stage and its associated immoralities the same as I have said above, with emphatic



urge that young people beware of all theatrical appeal. Being in that city three years ago, I was surprised to find that pastor acting as instructor in dramatics for a combined church group of young people giving pious theatricals—for the good of the cause! Mayhap he had taken lessons from a sister in a Roman school of that city who believed that the end justifies the means. A Protestant girl attended the school (near her home) who refused to attend mass (or something equally pious), giving the excuse that her mother told her not to. But the good sister was zealous and urged the child to go anyhow, and report to her mother that she had been obedient. When the girl protested that she would be telling a lie, the good, pious crucifix-wearer and virgin-worshipper replied: "Can't you tell a lie to save your soul?" Looks like Pastor Blank had backslid (though not a Methodist) in the matter of dramatics, and had decided to do evil that good might come—help church theatricals so as to save more souls, especially of young people ensnared by plays (pretenses) instead of hearing the truth of the gospel! He not only acted as teacher in the union of church dramatic clubs, but also acted the leading roles when the plays were publicly staged. O the times! O the manners! How long pious frauds?

Furthermore, plain sacrilege is committed in religious dramatization—making a show and entertainment of what is most sacred. How any even nominal Christian can excuse, much less approve and applaud that relic of the infernal Dark Ages known as the Passion Play, is explainable only by the Scripture that says many are blinded in mind by Satan so as not to perceive truth. So obsessed with the drama complex have modernists become, that they often refer to events in the history of the church and of individual Christians as dramas. Life is called a drama, and some very serious spiritual expe-

riences are called tragedies. Play, show, sham, pretense, unreality, imagination, appear to be all that modern minds can grasp. It is a revamp of the ancient pagan philosophy of illusion now conspicuously parading as the marvellous discovery of that liar and deceiver, Mary Baker-Glover-Eddy. The Bible itself does not escape the hallucination of modern dreamers in religion who classify it with drama. There seems to be no substance or foundation to modern religion—just frothy fancies of self-expressive ideals, a sublimated anthropomorphism. "Other foundation can no man lay" is confirmed in the flimsy and tottering substitutes being so blatantly proposed in place of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Has the bottomless pit been opened and are its denizens parading as teachers of theatrical religion to entertain and deceive the nations? "Life is real, and life is earnest". God has no use for fiction or drama or stage settings. We cannot play with him, nor does he play with us. A stage show, or pretense, is essentially contrary to righteousness, so has no place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Drama appeals to, and responds to, the imagination in a restless and disturbed state of mind that always seeks new things in satiety from what seems the monotony of existence. But such sense of monotony is due to false or abnormal relations and attitudes. Minds made in the image of God cannot be satisfied with mere material matters, but crave for the unseen. When the spiritual nature has not been renewed, bringing into fellowship with God, the mind seeks relief by imagining all sorts of things, so living in an artificial world, a land of dreams. Hence fiction and drama. Curiosity as to what may develop in a story or a play is largely their appeal, with change from the monotony of mere material existence. But born-again people, real Christians, though in the flesh are not of the flesh. Their



citizenship is in heaven, and the life of heaven is in them now. That life is in continual development, free from monotony and also from curiosity (always disturbing); for faith brings peace and rest. Truth is eternal. It is life, and life does not satiate. Truth is reality, not fancy or conjecture, or pretense. The water of life is a full fountain within every Christian, bubbling up with most interesting and satisfying activity. No hour or moment is dull to the spiritual mind, and it has no time or inclination for novels or theatres. Churches and the schools they conduct or support should cultivate the spiritual instead of the carnal. O the Divine Monotony! "The same yesterday, today and forever"—He who changes not; with whom is "no variableness nor shadow of a turning". No shows, no fictions, no make-ups, no pretensions, no novelties of any kind are needed to ward off tedium from an immortal soul.

#### HEART PURITY: WHAT; HOW

PURE IN HEART. Simple, sincere, true, faithful, without guile—such only can see God. Such, only, can recognize, appreciate and understand him. Such, only, can endure, not to say enjoy, his presence. Such, only, can have fellowship with him. The proof of that fellowship is living in the light of God's truth—the light that was manifested in Jesus Christ, the Word of Life Eternal. (See 1 John 1:1-7). Whoever reads this and believes will keep away from every cult of mystery now parading as a better than Christian light, but which is only delusion of darkness while pretending wisdom.

How may such heart-purity be obtained? The passage just cited partly answers. Then James 4:6-10 is right to the point—self-humiliation and surrender to God who then works in the soul. Also 1 Pet. 1:22 is emphatic—purifying the soul in obeying the truth. In

Acts 15:9 we read: "Purifying their hearts by faith." Indeed, the whole process of redemption has its end in restoring man to Godlikeness. Many details call for repentance (change of attitude) on our part before God can do in us the good work.

Perhaps nothing is more surprising (being little suspected because so unfamiliar with spiritual Christian teachings) than the proposition that faith is hindered, prevented, even made impossible, by an attitude of catering to, and fear of, the opinions of men. Jesus said (John 5:44): "How can you believe who receive honor one of another?" Catering and cringing at the shrine of public opinion; eagerness for popular approval and praise; following fashion, fortune or fame—all are effectual hindrances to faith. They kill spiritual attitudes and even prevent their conception. Many fear the opinion of their neighbors and associates more than they fear God. Pride before men may pervert faith or prevent faith in God and his truth. People will be in style even if it destroys their apprehension and appreciation of eternal truth. Cheap carnal vanity may kill interest in heaven. Men contradict God to be in favor with men. Women follow immodest fashions in defiance of God's order, insulting their natural instinct and challenging the lust of men. Multitudes prefer the praise of foolish humans to the blessedness of sharing God's nature and seeing him in full immortality.

The pure heart is a modest heart, yet a courageous heart—faithful to God regardless of the opinion of man. Our schools are instrumental in fostering the pride of life that prevents faith in the truth of God, but encourages faith in the falsehoods of the Devil. Yes, indeed; for it is educated people who fall into the snares of certain cults like Theosophy, which flatters instead of humbles human pride, even ridiculing repentance, forgiveness



and all the processes of Christian redemption, while extolling self-sufficiency—aided by “invisible helpers” as servants-in-waiting (evil spirits). [See *Modern Theosophy: Whence? What? Whither?*]. Again we repeat that pride, show, worldly applause and honor are the conspicuous goals of educational activities today—selfish motives catered to and commended. Education should be (as formerly) for the purpose of developing, refining and furnishing minds to be and do their best and noblest. Instead, it is chiefly directed to fitting for positions and profits. The money-getting and honor-getting pull of a degree is the principal concern of schools today. This profit-and-honor aim stifles higher aims, and prevents faith in the spiritual. The school atmosphere is without the spiritual, having only the intellectual and psychical with the result that the sensuous prevails exactly as we read in Jude 18,19. That is an exact description of the present situation. The psychical being substituted for the spiritual, there is no sense of responsibility beyond self-expression, which runs in the way of carnal desire and whimsical choice. The best Greek manuscripts do not read “separating themselves,” but “making distinctions,” the word for “themselves” not appearing. Not dogmatically, but suggestively, I venture the interpretation that Jude referred to the cult of self-expression that decides its own opinions and conduct in disregard of any voice from God. It surely fits present practice.

This makes of humans only trained animals (evolution again) instead of divine heroes, real super-beings according to God's plan. Schools are the most active agents for keeping people out of the Kingdom of Heaven—by inciting attitudes contrary thereto. The most educated can not see God, if their hearts are set in the groove of animal existence—without aspirations higher than the earth. The carnal mind, however well informed

and trained, is enmity against God. The sorriest sight on earth is the educated man who feels self-sufficient. The monkey-man consciousness developed in schools teaching evolution *can not* have the God-consciousness. This conspicuous product of modern education must be entirely changed by repentance before our titled graduates can enter the Kingdom of Heaven or see God.

#### RELIGIOUS SINGING

Probably no phase of worship is so misused as the very important and conspicuous one of singing. Singing from a pure heart is not singing for exhibition or entertainment, but to express sentiment and emotion. The virtue of song is not in its mere physical demonstration but in its heart-melody. A choir sings to entertain and show off. Heart-melody is impossible when attention is directed to technical execution or display. Advertisements of religious meetings often emphasize the fine and special music provided as a lure to attend—making an opera-house of what professes to be a house of God. Neither pulpit nor pew in such piety is pure in heart or even elementally sensible in discrimination. Such "services" are services to the flesh. The prevalence of materialism is largely due to carnal churchliness in place of spiritual processes. God listens to no fancy singing. He regards the heart, not the voice. Some musical Christians complain of the imperfect singing of uncultured fellow-worshippers. But the probabilities are that the defective voices are the sincere ones that go home justified and happy—blessed. Sensitive musical critics need to repent and be converted before joining a congregation in Christian worship. Years ago when entertained in a fine New England home an old-time organ-grinder, superceded by the radio—blessed be the memory of the crank-turner, his monk and even his cup.



Come back, O Italy, and relieve us of the jazzed torture and growling torment of infernal r-a-d-i-o. Excuse the interruption, but the radio next door deserves a hard spanking. To resume—that hand-organ started a tune in the street. Knowing my hostess to be a trained musician from the Boston Conservatory of Music, I was surprised when, instead of complaining, she commended with the comment that such music had a proper place in affording some pleasure to poor and uncultured people whose hum-drum lives found some relief even in mechanical melody. So, instead of trying to relieve her own ears by scolding about the discord and harshness of street music, she listened to it as a study of the conditions it represented. In forgetting self for the sake of others, she transformed a torture into a pleasure. I have remembered that (no, this; for it is not far away) incident for 37 years with much satisfaction. It beats any transformations possible to alchemy, chemistry and magic combined. With stronger motive should musical Christians bear with the poor voices and bad technique of devout fellow-worshippers in song.

A story is told of a monastery in France where none of the monks could sing. At their vesper services the time for song was spent in silence, each monk making melody in his heart unto the Lord. On a certain occasion a monk from another monastery came that way and stopped for a day's visit. He was noted for his superb voice and wonderful singing. At the evening hour he was asked to sing. The monks were thrilled and delighted with the treat. That night the abbot of the monastery dreamed that an angel came to him for an interview. He asked the angel how the fine singing of the evening was liked up in heaven. The angel replied that no singing at all was heard in heaven that evening from that monastery, much to the surprise and

confusion of the abbot. On the following evening, the guest having departed, the monks could offer only their usual silent heart-songs. Again the abbot dreamed of the angel's visit, during which he complimented the fine singing of that evening. The abbot replied that they had no singing; for none of the monks could sing and the visitor had gone. But the angel repeated that, up in heaven, they heard very beautiful singing. So was emphasized the virtue of heart-melody, as against fine vocal display. A word to the wise is said to be sufficient. Where, then, are the wise? God has been teaching a long time, not only this item, but many others; Bible schools teach (at) Scripture texts; trained men teach from pulpits; tons of religious literature are read—yet not only this item but every fundamental principle of spiritual life is flagrantly violated everywhere. The wise seem to be on vacation. REPENT sounds the alarm.

Display singing does not come from pure hearts. Distractive singing, too, is not from the heart. Some of the most devout songs are often used as mere fillers of programs and to cover confusion, as when people are entering a church or meeting-place, or to cover confusion from changing seats or from taking collections. It is a psychical performance without a tinge of the spiritual, and is a trifling with the primary purpose of song in the church. More: it is an insult to God.

Another common use of psychical (instead of heart) singing is very mischievous. That is, singing to stimulate a religious attitude in preparation for a program of preaching or teaching—to work up a receptive and responsive feeling in sympathy with the occasion, with no regard to understanding of truth. This is merely a modified form of spiritistic *en rapport*, about the most dangerous condition people can get into. This is the common misuse of what is termed "gospel singing."



A half-hour song program is a needed introduction in modern so-called revival and evangelistic meetings as a psychical intoxicant substituted for and supplanting the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of truth rather than of emotion. Hitting the sawdust trail because of intoxicated impulses instead of intelligent conviction is one of the disastrous delusions of this much humbugged age. The craze for dramatics turns even religion into stage-play until heart sincerity is hardly known. I do not say that deliberate hypocrisy is practiced in these things. On the contrary, delusions mislead well-meaning people the most. The great need of the hour is to hold fast the plain word of God instead of following sensational and perverted leaders. The substitution of psychology for spirituality is one expression of the rule of the beast in even the Church. Disaster must result, and it is already working. Cults of delusion abound and thrive, with no noticeable remonstrance from professedly orthodox societies. When advertisements of old-line church meetings hug and kiss those of Spiritism, Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Bahaism, Eddyism, Russellism, and other infernal inventions, it means that the Churches have lost what spiritual understanding they may once have had so as not to recognize and flee the fellowship of serpents. Such fellowship means guilt; for its silence shouts endorsement, even as a maid's silence consents to the rapist or seducer. Most of the victims of those cults are uninformed members of Churches whose pastors are too stupid to care for their flocks outside the narrow range of ritual which, parrot-like, they have absorbed from their theological schools. They lack the spiritual perception and energy to investigate in other lines of vital importance. Watering and pruning (to change the figure) are as important as planting, even though not spreading over as much ground. Or, sheep-

herding is as important as sheep-collecting. The Lord is my shepherd. Faithful under-shepherds (pastors) protect their sheep from wolves, even in sheep's clothing.

Christ sent his ministers to *preach* the gospel and to *teach* the truth, not to sing it. The apostles carried no "singing evangelists," cornetists, fiddlers, drummers or tambourinists, not even harpists or flutists, on their evangelizing trips. How did they manage to get the crowds and keep them coming without any sideshows? Listen to the whisper—they spoke the truth so frankly and sincerely, without affectation and stage-play that rational minds saw indications of truth, and the Holy Spirit could consistently confirm the messages with conviction. The first use of singing to emotionally aid a preacher that I have found recorded was by Arius, the notorious heretic who did much mischief in the early Church. He practiced psychology (polite for hypnotism) instead of spirituality. Psychology is now generally a substitute for the spiritual in religious lines, which explains the lack of understanding of Christian truths; for spiritual things can be understood only spiritually. Psychology has no power unto holiness, nor is its end everlasting life. In the early church singing was *at the close* of meetings to express heart response to the message of the hour, and to give praise to the Lord. An early writer said that they concluded their meetings with a prayer and a hymn to Christ as God, after reading and explanation of Scripture as long as time permitted. The main thing was instruction in the truth as the basis of life. Without it prayer and praise may be misused to evil—idolators pray and sing. The ancient ~~ark~~<sup>altar</sup> of incense (symbol of prayer and praise) was closely associated with the ark of the covenant (symbol of the inviolable word of God), showing that proper worship must be in accord with truth—not fancy or feeling, which,



being psychical, may be delusive. Jesus Christ promised answer to prayer only when according to his word, and song is musical prayer and praise. Many popular religious songs express only the fancies and feelings of their composers, while contradicting Scripture. Their use is very mischievous. Some songs are recognized as theologically off-color, but used with the extenuating remark that the author's heart was better than his head. Charity, in covering a multitude of sins, may excuse an ignorant composer, but the informed repeater of the error is not pure in heart—sincere. Arius was shrewd in slyly indoctrinating the unwary who sang his pretty "Gospel Songs" until they became Unitarians.

Resort to group psychology is a trick of magic, and magic is an abomination with God. Certain kinds of music have a magical hypnotic influence. When used with religious sentiment in a crowd the effect is very marked. The emotional impulse incited is mistaken for conviction, and the response is supposed to be conversion. But the delusion shows up when the excitement cools down. Certain sects and "movements" have but little else than this form of magic. Their activity is largely confined to such demon-strations. With all his keenness in some lines, John Wesley adopted the group psychology tactics, which explains much of his seeming success and also the shoddy quality of most of the results, with the conspicuous play of backslidings and reclamations, and dependence on periodic "protracted meetings" now called revivals. Nothing of this was known in apostolic churches. It is a mischievous delusion. Emotionalism is not Christianity. Impulsive mass action was not encouraged by the Master. When, at times, there was prospect of its spontaneous outburst he quietly slipped away, leaving the crowds to disperse and cool down to sober reflection. On the one occasion

when he did permit a demonstration, the crowd soon proved its insincerity. While Jesus and his apostles addressed crowds when crowds came to listen, they did not make dramatic gestures to work them or employ magic tricks to constrain them to hit the sawdust trail or do anything else. They just spoke the truth as directly and simply as when talking to individuals. It was only expected that individuals would respond. "He that has ears, let him hear." "Whosoever hears my word." "Those who were disposed . . . believed." Sober attention to truth, not excited emotion, is the genuine prompter to confess Christ. The wise will heed.

One of the most mischievous practices possible is the misuse of singing in a way that promotes insincerity. People are urged to sing whose hearts are not at all in tune with the sentiment sung. Such hypocrisy is spiritual suicide. Emotional stimulation from without, and that fails to move the will, is fatal to the spiritual. Unconverted choir singers are a hard lot. Pastors who encourage such singers, or exhort "everybody sing," need to study the elemental principles of spiritual life. They need to learn that purity of heart—sincerity—is essential in Christian worship. It is amazing how unconverted people sing most devotional songs, often even leading the singing. Being interested in the mere music, they sing what they do not at all mean in their hearts. Novices in the Christian life are led to sing sentiments which only advanced Christians can truly express. A reform is needed here.

People sing lustily "I love to tell the story" who can not be hired to tell of Jesus and his love; who do not know it experimentally, who even have little faith in it. They sing with zest "Sweet hour of prayer," when they never pray, and would go to a show any time rather than to a prayer-meeting. They sing eagerly "I will



follow Jesus; where he leads me I will follow," but refuse the cross and shy at unpopularity and neglect that render friendless and homeless. They sing boastfully "I'll go with him, with him, all the way," when they refuse to go six steps in the way of self-denial, which was his way. They sing boldly "I'll go with him to the garden," when they would flee from the first approach of Gethsemane's sorrow. They sing bravely "Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee," but live in abject devotion to the world and the flesh—slaves to fashion and frivolity. They sing devotedly "His faithful follower I would be," but resent as meddling criticism any kind advice a competent teacher may offer to guide. Women sing beautifully "In the cross of Christ I glory" who will only carry a cute little toy idolatrous cross and glory in the fashion goddess and in the naked emancipation that contradicts Christ and prevents his work. Such singing as these samples show is common, not exceptional. It is direct lying to God, to the Holy Spirit. It is singing unto spiritual death. Spiritual paralysis prevails much everywhere, and insincerity such as this is largely the explanation. Deadness, obtuseness, seared consciences, lack of interest in and response to spiritual instruction—all mean lack of sincerity, purity of heart. "Purify your hearts, you double-minded."

Showy sham in singing is not alone in the sham services of sham societies simulating solemn saintliness in swell synagogues. From cellar to garret, and up to the point of steeples, show is the big item. Church architecture is largely in imitation of pagan temples, and out of tune with anything Christian. Showiness prevails wherever money is available or debts can be piled up in face of "Owe no man anything". Even the big organ is a showy pretense, the real pipes being insignificant tubes inside the impressive box whose painted front with gilt

dummy pipes are only to awe the worshippers. Vanity and hypocrisy insult God in pretended worship! How anybody can read the New Testament and fail to see the utter incongruity of such shams with the principles of Christianity is a puzzle, except as explained by the apostle who says that the devices of Satan deceive many into false ways. He is the author of pride and pretense; so whenever they appear it is plain that he is busy. But how can Christian leaders continue so stupid as not to recognize the meaning of all, and institute reforms? It is evident that they do not read their text-book (N.T.) enough to learn what it really teaches, and they have not the Holy Spirit to quicken the understanding.

#### SINCERITY AND DIVORCE

We are reading the Beatitudes in open daylight, not in the "dim religious light" of a cathedral, nor even of a country chapel, where still hover shadows from the Dark Ages begrimed with the smoke of monkey-science, and are finding surprising things. We have noted several items regarding sincerity, while others may not take our attention here. But one thing seldom considered needs brief comment. We leave the discussion of divorce in general with the comment that it is astonishing how professing Christians, even Bible teachers, violate most specific words of the Lord, taking advantage of human laws to get divorces forbidden by God—certainly an expression of insincerity.

An item commonly overlooked (strangely) is the lack of integrity among divorced women who retain the forfeited names of their former husbands. A renegade American has no right to call himself an American. An apostate has no right to the name Christian, though many now have the effrontery to claim that name. So a divorced woman has no right to the name she had as



a wife. Jane Jones was Mrs. Sam Smith only as wife of Sam Smith. When, by divorce, she ceases to be so related she loses the right to the title. To retain the name is dishonest. It is a denial of the divorce. When Smith & Jones dissolve partnership and set up separate establishments, neither party may rightfully continue to display the old sign. It would be fraud to do so. It is false pretense for Jane Jones to call herself Mrs. Sam Smith when the court says she is not. She is not even Jane Smith; for she was a Smith only in her married state. Not only is such a woman dishonest with herself but with her former husband and with society. It is a puzzle how a woman can bear, not to say wish, to hold the name of a divorced husband. The excuse about her children is not good. Other relief is better. REPENT.

This is an illustration of the prevalent insincerity in profession, collectively and individually. This claims to be a Christian nation, but some of its laws and customs are directly contrary to Christian teachings. Many of the Churches listed as Christian, and deliberately using the name, are definitely unchristian. This applies also to certain items among denominations accredited orthodox and "evangelical." A discussion of this would be an eye-opener, but it may be left to the pure in heart to ask, seek, knock—to their great surprise when returns come in. As to individuals, it is quite impracticable to undertake beyond the conspicuous lines here followed. The meaning of baptism is identification with Christ in complete abandonment of self, whatever may result. It is a state of mind little known and less appreciated in the cultured self-life of today. Real marriage means mutual identification of this life's interests. When the disaster of divorce comes, all the mutual elements are destroyed, including the name, sacred to its owner, as a reprobate forfeits the Christian name by apostasy.

Under this topic is the matter of breaking marriage engagements to which we have already given attention. Nothing in nature is trifling, but all is truly serious. In nothing human is there such responsibility as in mating for family life. The general flippant attitude in our land of culture makes queer comment on the educational and religious institutions that profess to fit folks for a rational and proper life. When we mention the mock marriages that pollute church entertainments that the wildest savage fetish-worshipper would be shocked at, we—but what's the use to say more about the shame?

#### SEEING GOD

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." In oriental countries (as Persia) monarchs rarely show themselves in public. Only those in the most intimate circles are permitted to look upon the royal countenance at all. One must have some royal quality to be admitted to the royal presence, where he can be free to face the king. "For they shall see God" is an allusion to that custom. It is very suggestive in connection with the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who have God-like qualities may be admitted to the presence of God. God can not be seen with physical eyes—he is the Invisible in that sense. He is Spirit—not *a* spirit, as many are mistaken in supposing. Only spiritual vision can perceive and recognize God. Only a man's spirit can understand a man's mind. So only a partaker of God's Spirit can know God's mind. The Bible is a mysterious book only to those who have not God's nature born in them. The pure in heart have the divine likeness, so are able to see God—not only hereafter, but even now in some degree. Such visions of God are glorious beyond language to describe—no form, but a Presence to the spirit and in the spirit. Some of the attributes of God are expressed in nature, and some of his purposes,



so that idolatry and superstitious so-called science have no excuse, but God himself can be seen only by the spiritual vision of the pure in heart. Moral simplicity and spiritual integrity are necessary to a clear vision of God. The sincerity that can see God is the kind that wants truth at any cost, and will follow it unto death.

SEEING GOD. We hear and see the word "vision" as applied to apparitions and to works of the imagination. Sometimes it signifies foresight, or prescience. In the childhood period of the world's development God used visions as means of communication to prophets, because the human mind did not yet have the faculty of spiritual insight, understanding, illumination—"the Spirit had not yet been given." Many pious people to this day, by failing to regard most important statements in the New Testament, have been misled by similar visions from deceiving spirits. When people fail to heed what God has made clear, and continue to follow the dark path, they are sure to stumble into some snare of Satan. It is a long sad story of which some of the worst chapters are now being written in the glare of full light by those who will not come out of the dens of darkness. The most active and pretentious cults of the hour started from visions supposed to be from heaven, but really from evil spirits against which Scripture fully warns.

Literal visions are now to be distrusted and rejected. When the light of truth came in Jesus Christ, and was fully developed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles, there was no more need of childish pictures and kindergarten blocks, as Paul put it (in our language), and to retain them is to renounce and forfeit Christ. The first two verses of Hebrews also states that Christian teaching displaces all the oldstyle revelations. Knowing the horrible havoc done by following visions and voices in these days, I make this item emphatic. Visualization,

so much stressed today, is but an intellectual adaptation of the crude makeshift that God used temporarily with unspiritual people. Glorifying in "visual education," as the school world now does, is glorying in shame; for it is a shame to be so unspiritual as to want even mental images to make truth real. Spiritual discernment is a direct apprehension of truth by the consciousness of its eternal fitness—the essential nature of things. When we become partakers of the Divine Nature, we have in ourselves the witness, persuasion, conviction of truth. Visualization, images, dramatization—all attempts at picturing—seem coarse and defiling, as cheapening the spiritual. They belong to idolatry.

The natural (psychical) mind *can not* understand or appreciate spiritual things. The great psychical activity of today leaves people utterly oblivious of the spiritual and really rational and Godly. This abnormal condition explains the many delusions and freak activities of the time. They are supposed by many to be better expressions of Christianity—because they follow false teachers without proper investigation. To see God, we must be genuinely spiritual, not carnal or psychical. To be born of the Spirit is to have the mind of the Spirit. Only as we are like God <sup>we</sup> can see him (1 John 3:2). To apprehend the character, teaching and work of Jesus is to see God (John 14:9,21). One does not have to be great or wealthy or educated to see God, but he must be pure in heart—clean, genuine, sincere, loyal, true. The Spirit searches the depths of God and sees God. In the spiritual mind we see God—we are BLESSED.



## THE PEACEMAKERS

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*Blessed are the peacemakers;  
for they shall be called sons of God.*

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THE Jewish expectation was of a Messiah who would command armies in successful warfare against their enemies, especially against the Roman power. Redress, revenge, victory, dominion, were the big items in their Messianic hopes. They had no spiritual vision. Military power was the glory they longed for. They were burdened by political yokes that were most galling to their pride, their sense of superiority, their longing for supremacy—from a misconception of their mission as the chosen people. Although far above their pagan neighbors and their Roman conquerors, they did not rise to the high spiritual conception of their intended place and their appointed privilege. They made themselves impotent among the nations by their unfaithfulness to their covenant with God and by their stupid perversions of his directions. The whole earth was a place of misery through the violence and oppression of conquerors who were admired, lauded and celebrated as honorable and happy by inconsistent people, even victims, probably primarily prompted by fear seeking favor.

Quarreling, contention, strife, war, filled the pages of history with their constantly repeated stories. When Messiah came he disappointed preconceived notions of his royalty, being announced, not by a brass-band with drums and trombones, but by a choir of angels singing "Peace on earth; good-will to men." Instead of violence,

Jesus used instruction ; instead of a sword, the word of God's truth. Instead of inciting retaliation, he urged forgiveness. Instead of vengeance, he taught to love all enemies, even to doing kindnesses to them and praying for them. Too tame a program to suit Jews! They repudiated such a Messiah. But he taught his little band of followers to persevere in teaching the same things, assuring final victory without violence. He even said that peacemakers are especially to be congratulated—they are blessed, and shall be called sons of God: shall be recognized as such and acknowledged to be such.

Some call attention to the apparent contradiction between the song of the angels announcing peace on earth and the words of Jesus "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword." They neglect to apply one of the first principles of interpretation—using the context to show the occasion, direction and range of a remark. Much mischief has been done by isolating statements and making them seem of other or general application. That is a specialty of the Devil, fanatics, hobby-riders, sectaries, and other ignoramuses. It is safe to let Scripture explain itself, if done sensibly without forcing. The best preaching is expository, if done intelligently. Personal experience confirms this. It would be almost surely a wasted effort to argue with an old Primitive Baptist against foot-washing as a designated church ceremony. But, once upon a time, I gave a talk on John 13:1-17 when an old Primitive Baptist was present. He said to a neighbor that he was convinced of his church's error. To know the simple truth is to be free from superstition as well as other bondage. Young preachers are wise who learn to explain rather than argue.

Returning to the peace question, Jesus was not talking of general conditions, but specifically of the personal



dangers and sufferings his disciples must expect. He explained what he meant immediately after what he said about peace, namely, that acceptance of his teachings would result in disturbance of friendships, even to the breaking of family ties. That had nothing to do with the encouragement of peace as a general condition on earth. The warfare warned of would not be propagated by his followers, but waged against them by those who rejected him. The conflict, it should be noticed, on the believers' side is one of choice, of attitude towards Christ—a battle between natural affection and the call of a higher attachment prompted by spiritual recognitions. It is not a warfare of arms, but a conflict of opinions and affections due to the new teachings. Whatever of such inevitable disturbance, the truth holds good that peacemakers are especially approved of God.

#### STRIFE PROMOTERS NOT PEACEMAKERS

Peacemakers, not strife-promoters, are blessed. Within themselves they have in their very attitude and effort the quality that is godlike, therefore eternal. Peace, harmony, adjustment of all elements, calmness, poise. Having this character, one radiates peace everywhere unconsciously as well as promoting directly. The history of Israel was largely one of war—a good point to consider when the pretentiously wise tell us that Jesus and his teachings were developed out of Judaism. A bitter spring does not send out sweet water. A leopard can not change its spots, nor an Ethiopian his skin. It is axiomatic that like produces like. Only fools believe the protoplasmic- and monkey-stories of human origin. Peace can not evolve from war preparations, nor from military academies. Peace is not promoted by such societies as the G.A.R. or D.A.R. or S. of V. These keep alive the war spirit and hinder peace on earth, as also

do memorial celebrations. The use of chaplains and religious exercises by these is a humbug so far as any true piety is involved. Christian schools giving military training insult the name they profess. Some time ago I visited a southern mountain school with some special interest. On the corner-stone of the main building I read the motto of the school's purpose deeply engraven: "That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." (Col. 1:28). More than pleased, I was delighted and eager to share the work. It seemed that I had found a school with a real purpose. But presently, in looking about, I came to an armory with stacks of military rifles. Enough! I left the campus sorrowful. Perfect men in Christ Jesus are not made by teaching how to shoot fellow-men. That corner-stone label is a hypocrite as long as peacemakers are the blessed ones in Christ's opinion. For years I have looked in vain for a Christian school to give something valuable to. All are proudly emphasizing things that violate the Beatitudes in some way. Wherever rivalry is, even though not in military array, there is peacemaking reviled.

Out of Jewish warrings came no peace, nor advocate of peace. It was admitted that Jesus was a teacher sent from God, not a product of the schools. He said that his doctrine was not his own, but came from God. He repeatedly asserted that the Kingdom of Heaven had come down from above, so was no human evolution or development. God had tolerated wars, sometimes even promoting and directing. But that was outside of the spiritual kingdom. The Jews were an earthly people and could be dealt with only by earthly processes, what Paul termed world-rudiments. God acted as conditions necessitated. The coming of light in Christ changed the situation completely. Failure to walk in the light results in wars and rumors of wars. The present state



of world-perplexity proves that so-called Christian nations are only pretenders. Someone has said:

Children of this world love to fish in troubled waters, but children of God are the quiet in the land.

The natural man can not see spiritually, so does not understand or appreciate talk of peace without fighting for it. Lasting peace must come from the heart. Yes, but did not the apostle Paul endorse war when he said that rulers, acting as God's agents, do not carry the sword in vain? (Rom. 13:4). Here is a case where interpretation must regard circumstances and purposes involved. Christians at Rome were especially aware of the pagan quality of the state rulers, and were inclined to resent such government as an imposition on their Christian character and liberty. Paul explained that all state government is God's provision for police protection of society, and so is to be respected and supported regardless of personal qualities of magistrates. The sword was the symbol of authority and power. Armies for police purposes are not in contradiction of Christ's peace program, but in furtherance of it by putting down riots and all violence against society. This is not militarism, and it has no bearing on the war question. But it incidentally bears on the matter of capital punishment by the state. This Scripture expressly says that God appoints such official action as a restraint to evil-doers. Some mistaken zealots cry "murder" when a criminal is executed by court order. But that contradicts plain Scripture, which is thoroughly rational and sensible in regard to civic as well as personal social relations.

#### THE SNARL AT PACIFISTS

When Christ pronounces approval of peacemakers, it is strange for people who profess to be Christians to decry the efforts of those who try to secure peace among nations. Those who hurl "Pacifist" as a reproach, a

slur and a sneer, should remember "he who despises you despises me; and he who despises me despises him who sent me." "Pacifist, Pacifist" snarl the dogs of war, and a chorus of puppies yelps an echo. The insult is really to the Lord, whom peacemakers only obey in their efforts. When the D.A.R. invited President Hoover to address a meeting, and then denounced him for his honest and faithful words in behalf of peace, it put itself on record before the universe as ungrateful, disloyal and contemptible. It also put itself on record as opposed to God in his approval of peace programs.

Peacemakers being sons of God, warmakers must be sons of Satan. To be rated with God's family is a high honor, infinitely better than the worldly acclaim paid to heroes of war; so pacifists are to be congratulated for being among the blessed. The scorn of infidels is not a disgrace, but a distinction. Opponents of pacifism align themselves as enemies of God; for whoever opposes a child of God opposes the Father himself, whose life is in his sons.

All should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who honors not the Son honors not the Father who has sent him.—John 5:23.

Peacemakers, whether in national or state affairs, community matters, social conditions, family feuds, or only individual quarrels, partake, insofar, of the one Spirit who is eternal. They are all blessed as to this item. Of course, this one virtue is not a passport to heaven, but to this extent they are allied with the Kingdom of Heaven.

#### PEACE AND UNITY

Peace makes for unity. The work of Jesus Christ was to reconcile (make peace) the world to God (not God to the world, as some, including Methodists, have mistakenly and mischievously stated it). The apostle Paul called himself a minister of reconciliation. The



gospel is called the gospel of peace. The Holy Spirit works for unity, peace, harmony. By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. Quarreling and strife between members of the human body are so unnatural and suicidal as to be unthinkable. So discord in society is irrational and destructive. Strife grieves the Holy Spirit. We are to suffer wrong rather than contend for even our rights. In the end we get more than we lose—the reward of fidelity to God. The urge to unity and peace applies urgently to the matter of sects, whether church or other. Paul acted as peacemaker in the incipient sectarian outbreak in the Church at Corinth. To do so now with the horrible hosts of sects is a fine undertaking. But the federation scheme is useless; for it has only the nature of a human treaty, not the life and power of the Holy Spirit. The antics and capers now being done by the Federal Council of Churches, especially the "birth-control" stunt [the slang fits] proves no relation to the Holy Spirit. That contraption (we are looking at truth in daylight, so miss the usual camouflage that hides deceptive piety) seems to be like those Ephesians who said they had not heard of any Holy Ghost. Churches can do nothing toward real world-peace until they have genuine peace among and within themselves. Some repenting is in order here.

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." A big truth is in this, so big that it is not seen by the little eyes of the world's great educators of today. They talk of promoting world-peace by teaching school-children international ideals, and fostering a sense of human solidarity in them by telling how like themselves children of other lands live and play. Very well incidentally, but there is no dynamic in it. Children of the same school and home quarrel and fight [I have a scar on a finger that was made sixty years

ago in a fight with my twin brother right at home, so am not guessing!]. All power for good comes from God. Paul was not able to perform his own willing to do the right, and he was no exception. All children in all schools may be taught all ideals by all teachers without making peace on earth until people and nations honestly accept and obey the wisdom from above—Jesus Christ. And it is useless to teach school-children the proposed ideals and amenities when they see little but encouragements to war. The very walls of schoolrooms yell "Sic 'em, Tige" from pictures of battles and their heroes as incitements to patriotism. Several other things add to the need of repentance before expecting to get peace out of a school-room—too many to detail here. What has been said about school rivalries applies here, also. Question: Why not teach and practice what God says about peace? Neither school, Sunday-school, Church, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., or any other known society is on the job now. No competition! Education unfolds the mind, but does not change the heart. Not by any education can real peacemakers be made, but by having Christ formed within, as Paul said—by getting Christ's disposition through regeneration. They who laugh at peacemakers prove themselves unregenerate.

Real peacemakers act from peaceable disposition in their own hearts. Their blessedness is from the heart condition confirmed by outward acts. The blessedness inheres; reward for doing follows. "Blessed *are*," but "*shall be* called sons." Peacemakers are often abused, ridiculed and despised, but they *are* blessed nevertheless, and *shall be* rewarded more than to offset the present troubles. They are often distrusted and disowned by men, but God recognizes them as partakers of himself, and will own them as his children. They may be alone in their efforts, but will be received into the company



of God's family, with everlasting reward. Peacemaking in small matters is important and noble, as truly as in large interests. The following is a pleasant picture:

We see a man now and then who, without being officious or a meddler in other people's affairs, is always dropping oil in most timely fashion on "squeaky things". When he meets a friend who is excited, he says a gentle word which gently quiets him. When one complains to him of a slight or an injury received, he allays the hurt feeling by suggesting the Christly way of looking at it. Wherever he goes he is a peacemaker. He carries in his own life an influence which makes men ashamed of unlovingness and inspires them with the desire to live sweetly and in patient love.—*J. R. Miller* in *UPPER CURRENTS*: Crowell.

### NON-RESISTANCE

The doctrine of non-resistance is often ridiculed, but it is no foolish fancy at all. Even from the lower standpoint of physical well-being it has an advantage. The fighting-back attitude of mind has a specific and even violent effect upon the secretory glands of the body. For mere health's sake, and for comfort's sake, it is better to turn the other cheek, and even smile at an insult, than to resent it and strike back. Much greater are the mental, moral and spiritual interests protected by non-resistance. In this item (as in all others) Jesus Christ practiced what he preached, and won out by it. Apart from higher considerations, he would not be The Man of History if he had been a peevish, resentful retaliator against every insult offered him. Non-resistance not practical? How many who say or think this have ever really tried it? Snap judgement is not fair. "If you love me, keep my commandments," said the Lord. So Christians who love the Master will keep the command to non-resistance. Then will they realize something of the blessedness of meekness also.

Better melt an enemy down by kindnesses (heaping coals of fire on his head) than destroy him by violence

(putting the fire under him). To bless them that curse you and pray for them who despitefully use you, means that you are a superman, a peacemaking son of God. What you can do the nation can do, if it wants to; for Heaven is pledged to help the will to righteousness. A people that practices peace sincerely will not be put to confusion; for God will honor those who honor him in obeying his word. Pursuing peace with commitment of results unto the God of peace, brings his sustaining power with blessings. Let the United States of America practice the "In God we trust" that she stamps on her coins, and she need not fear any dogs of war. Let her bury every hatchet, and put over it the old familiar farewell, *REQUIESCAT IN PACE*.

Christ commended peace even in small matters of dispute. Instead of going to law, he advised compromise. An honest lawyer today will advise his client to adjust his trouble out of court. He knows that the result of a lawsuit is uncertain, depending on what can be worked out of the court rather than on the merits of the case. I say this on advice from a lawyer who told me that there is no such thing as justice in any court anywhere today. Peace is good policy as well as right principle. Better suffer wrong than violate principle. The spirit of martyrdom is rare today. Respect is had for present wishes rather than for future blessings. It is a mockery to pray "Thy Kingdom come" while refusing to obey its necessary principles.

In all phases of life throughout Christendom the emphasis is quite contrary to the Beatitudes, showing lack of integrity. The most perverted notions ought to yield to even a little thoughtful reading of the New Testament, yet so stubborn is pride in human self-direction that many theologically trained men are teaching what is contrary to plain Scripture. For instance (one from



many) a young pastor from a "Fundamentalist" Bible Institute told his young men that Jesus Christ wanted them to go to a war that was one of the least excusable and most violent in history, a shame even to Mars. He exhibited from his pulpit, as a Roll of Honor, a list of the young men of his congregation who had enlisted. And this with his hand on the pulpit Book which reads "Blessed are the peacemakers" and also "He who rejects me rejects him who sent me." The worldly, as well as moral and spiritual, disasters that have followed that war reprove the heedless affront to God by professing Christendom. They told us the twaddle that those who died in battle went straight up to glory, in contradiction of God's word. Church pews empty? They ought to be. Let people search the Scriptures honestly alone and in local classes, without biased notions. A more loyal pastor was recently quoted in a newspaper as saying:

We take counsel of our fears and build battleships, but Jesus took counsel of good will [should say God] and talked of brotherhood. Men want the Christian religion [?], but fail to see the simplicity of Jesus's teachings. He told his disciples to "follow me", and loyalty to him means to think as he does, say what he says, do what he does and love what he loves.

#### WORLD-PEACE

To the natural man the idea of world-peace is an idle dream. It is beyond his conception, let alone expectation. Peacemakers seem to be fanatics on a wild-goose chase. And such it is if only men work for peace with their merely human devices. Real peace can come only by co-operation with the God of peace. With him all things are possible, even peace to a troubled and turbulent world. But it will not be by any magic. Until men want peace and are willing to act peaceably, God will not force it upon them. Only the hungry and thirsty

can be filled. What is true with individuals is true of society. In Phil. 4:7 we read of the peace of God which passes all understanding that comes to troubled people who commit themselves unto God's keeping. It is far beyond all human conception. So will it be to nations when they are ready to commit themselves to the care and protection of God instead of to violence. The text cited adds that the peace of God will keep both hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. The Greek word here for "keep" means to guard as a garrison is guarded by competent and faithful soldiers. So will a nation be guarded from enemies, if it commits itself to God for protection and refrains from meddling with other nations. What worry this nation has since it experiments in world-affairs instead of staying home and reading "In God we trust" on its own coins!

Peacemaking requires a peaceable tendency from a condition of peace within. A quarrelsome temper can not encourage peace. A resentful or suspicious or envious or sensitive or haughty or conceited disposition cannot foster peace, nor receive it. Talk of world-peace by a wrangling party-split Congress is worse than lost hot air; it is deadly hypocritical gas. We must cultivate peace within, then push it along, as it were, to others. In Heb. 12:14 we read "Follow peace with all men." This word "follow", in the Greek, means to put in motion, to drive forward, to pursue, to strive to reach or attain. World-peace will not come of itself. It must be gone after with earnestness as one hunts for game. That means effort, eagerness, persistence, even to the laying aside of hindrances. We cannot expect to catch a deer by only sitting down and looking at its tracks, but must pursue it. We cannot get world-peace by just smiling at it with beckoning finger and talking nicely about it, while war preparations are being pushed and



no adjustments are made that will capture peace and hold it. Not talk but action is one of the positive requirements of the Kingdom of Heaven. Peace involves humility. Before the nations can have any peace they must give up the practice of strife and emulation not only in world relations but at home. They must back down from pride, arrogance and self-exploitation. Peace calls for the oil of kindness, tolerance and friendship to be put upon troubled waters instead of stirring them with suspicion or selfish and exacting demands.

### INCITING TO STRIFE

Blessed are peacemakers. How about those who incite to strife? Repeating a bit to fit the point, how about our schools that encourage and cultivate the contentious disposition—strife in getting advantage, honor and reward? Debates, oratorical contests, class rivalries, athletic sports, even simple spelling matches—such things cater to and develop the very opposite attitude to peace, harmony, unity. They encourage party-spirit, show of prowess, pride of conquest. Such things are not blessed in God's view. Modern educational activities are so perverted as to be directly hostile to the essential elements of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Churches, too, indulge in similar encouragements among their many splits into groups that vie with one another. They all grieve the Holy Spirit, and then wonder why religion is so dead. We *can not* retain fellowship with Christ while practicing what is directly contrary to his nature and to his program of reconciliation on earth. There *must be* much real repenting (reversal of mind and conduct) before the Church is ready for the coming of the King in his glory to make her Queen. He is likely to find much in his kingdom that offends, and which must be gathered and cast out. The wise will clean them-

selves and their belongings in advance, so be prepared to meet the Lord. Right now is the proper time.

Jesus Christ, King of Peace, left his peace with his apostles, and, by the Holy Spirit, continues that peace in his people, who are to follow the way of peace in all things. We are responsible for working out in conduct the peace which God works in our hearts. If we fail to do so we are untrue, and forfeit the divine fellowship. We are to follow peace even though it result in harm to us—later reaction brings good, as "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men." If we suffer for righteousness' sake, we share the experience which our Lord endured, to be followed by sharing his glory. We are told, at the outset, to expect the cross before the crown. Not only in the item of peace, but in heeding all of the Beatitudes (principles of divine character and life), we are to accept persecution, if it comes, instead of cowering and forsaking the right way to please an evil world. Cowardice never conquers, but suffering even unto death has won many victories—the blood of martyrs the seed of the church. But moderns are not of martyr quality. Yet

Except a grain of wheat (falling into the ground) die, it remains alone, but if it die it brings forth much fruit.—John 12:24.

The nation that would sacrifice its pride and prowess in the interest of peace, in sincere confidence in God, would outshine all others in the pages of historic glory and accomplish more than with countless armies and exhaustless resources. The way of peace is God's way.

"Blessed are the peacemakers;  
for they will be called sons of God."



## THE PERSECUTED

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*Blessed are they which are persecuted on account of righteousness; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

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PERSECUTED—pursued, hard-pressed, hunted down, severely handled, not once but repeatedly, is the meaning of the term. Deliberate violence, not because of actual misconduct, but out of hatred because they are not like their persecutors. Goodness is intolerable to the very wicked. They resent it and every reminder of it. They hate virtue and love vice. They despise righteousness and cherish lawlessness. They vent their spleen upon those simple ones who choose the good and true. The disciples of Christ are to be conspicuous (as lamps in a dark place) for righteousness. They ought to be appreciated in the world. But, instead, they become targets for vicious, relentless assault.

The Jews looked for honor, prosperity, and liberty from their oppressors under the reign of Messiah. It was a great surprise to be told that, on the contrary, the truly righteous would be despised and assailed. The natural mind can not see the point to such a program. Why not kill off all opposers at once, if Christ has all power in heaven and on earth? But there is power in more ways than one. To make the wilderness rejoice and blossom as the rose takes more power and better power than that required to only clear the ground. It takes more and better power to endure pain than to cure it. "Blessed is the man who endures trial." The apostle Paul said: "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus will

suffer persecution." The program of the Kingdom of Heaven, in its application to and development in this world, as also its essential spiritual nature, was a complete disappointment to all Jewish conceptions and expectations. Up to this point the teaching of Christ in the Beatitudes showed that the old notion of nationalism as dependent upon consanguinity was to be ignored entirely. Instead, men of uncommon qualities were to possess the Kingdom—because of spiritual affinities (in the true sense, not the spiritistic). Jesus also emphasized this when he said that his real kin are those who do the will of his Father in heaven. Incidentally, it is worth while to note that this disposes of the common notion about "recognition in heaven," on which much has been said and written, and which is the main stock in trade of Spiritism. The true Christian teaching, in accord with the Beatitudes, is that believers are clothed upon, or given new bodies and new names in the new world, corresponding to the spiritual attainment. We will not even remember John and Mary as such, nor earthly relationships, the former things having passed away and all things being made new.

Then Jesus added the further surprise that earthly power and honor do not accompany such spiritual conditions, but that the very opposite is to be expected, even ridicule, resentment and violent hostility. That those who suffered were not to be pitied, but congratulated, was a hard thing to accept. Yet Jesus said: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." Happy, fortunate, because of suffering!—because they already partake of the Divine nature, and God is always denounced and opposed by the stubbornly wicked. They but share the treatment accorded the King, and also share his Kingdom. *Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* The Messiah—Christ—so loved the world that he gave



himself for it and to it, with all the suffering involved. Yet he was despised and rejected; slandered, reviled and persecuted unto the cross. In his book "The Work of the Holy Spirit," Kuyper says of Christ [Pages 566-7]:

And what reception did the world prepare for him? Did it offer him love, honor and admiration? Did it appreciate his holy love and kindle its own heart by its flame? On the contrary, the world was offended by it, could not bear it, counted it as mortal hatred; for he denied it its joys and sinful pleasures. He did not even smile when it was full of laughter, but when it begged for his applause he had only rebuke. . . His whole appearance was a living protest against the world's regime. Hence the world opposed him, treated his love as hatred, and returned it with contempt. Of course, if he had only lamented when it mourned, or danced when it piped unto him in the market-place, it would have built him a throne. But since he loved it with a holy love and yielded not to its entreaty, therefore it beat him, . . . and covered him with shame and mockery. And when he persisted to love and admonish, it pronounced its "Anathema", and the planting of the cross on Calvary was only a question of time. And what it did to Jesus it has done to all his followers. He that yields is tolerated. He that makes room for the world's spirit receives burning of incense. He that makes compromise with it may be assured of honor and glory; but he that refuses to compromise, loving the world with holy love, must sooner or later experience its wrath. God's people in every place and nation have ever sung: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous". Every age has its martyr-history.

Somebody has said: "No one deserves to be called a persecuted one unless he suffers for righteousness." It was only such that Jesus commended. But many have claimed the honor of being persecuted, even to martyrdom in some cases, who were very far from righteous but whose troubles were of their own making by misconduct in their communities. Someone has said:

Many a man imagines he is wearing a martyr's crown, when in reality he is only wearing a fool's cap.

Examples are numerous. The history of martyrdom is very interesting, instructive and inciting. Nothing

calls more for repentance (change of attitude) just now than in this, when the spirit of fidelity is so lost that compromise with falsehood and worldliness is common and even the shadow of possible martyrdom is shunned with terror. Many prefer to stain their Christian profession rather than be criticised or ridiculed for being out of style, however frivolous, unbecoming or immodest, though no violence is threatened.

Even now in America, a Jew who becomes a Christian is persecuted by his family and neighbors, confirming the word of Jesus, that a man's enemies would be from his own house. Jesus, himself, was called crazy by his brothers, so strange did his talk and conduct appear to them. Peter said that pagan Gentiles thought it queer that Christians did not run with them in their wild parties, so they spoke evil of them. Peter urged fidelity in standing fast—and the church people did not criticise for meddling in their affairs. Some probably would have done so, if they had reached the high state of development in self-expression which now resents advice! Real wisdom is meekly teachable. Educational influences of today are directed away from wisdom and understanding toward so-called creative mental action which is only presumptive imagination. Truth, wisdom and understanding were never created, much less can they be created now. They can not even be evolved. They have always been in God, and we must meekly receive them from him. "Lean not to your own understanding" is still safe and sane advice in the very face of all self-expression culture.

#### PERVERTED NOTIONS

Contrary to Christ's testimony about hostility from one's own family, and to the apostle Paul's statement of the uncertainty of converting one's husband (1 Cor.



7:16), some are so unskilled in the truth as to blame a believer who fails to convert members of the family. I mention a case to show that zealous people can misuse zeal from lack of knowledge, or from forgetting at the time. Some years ago a conspicuous so-called evangelist held "Inquiry Meetings" [good thing, rightly used] following the public preaching. It is recorded as though much to his credit that, on one occasion, a tearful woman sought his counsel and prayers for her unconverted husband. He asked how long she had been a married Christian woman. When she replied "Ten years," the world-famed teacher of the Gospel of Christ said: "Then I think, madam, that you are the one who needs to be prayed for, more than your husband." Should charity cover that error? Not when it shows a trend rather than a slip. Not when published by his devoted followers as a proud evidence of his superior spiritual ability to guide in the Christian way. The school and the literature that perpetuate that name are as far astray in other items from the truth as it is in Jesus. Sentiment and psychical impulse that constitute modern "evangelism" are sorry substitutes for sound doctrine. Misinterpreted and misapplied Christianity are worse than paganism, and a bigger insult to God and to human reason. Many twist Scripture to their own hurt and destruction. Even apart from false cults that misuse Scripture, many misguided believers misuse it, though differently. Yet all such perversion is disastrous.

#### ENDURANCE IN FAITH

True are these words: "All who wish to live piously in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." (2 Tim. 3:12). In our day there is not so much outward violence, but some social hostility is practiced. Inner persecutions, however, become worse. With the many corruptions of

Christianity, and the liaisons with idolatrous and spiritistic religions [I am talking Bible and fact, not fancy], the adversary, the Devil, gets bolder and busier until life is almost a continuous Calvary for the most pious Christians. What Paul says in Eph. 6:11-18 is no fancy as many know too well to dispute. "Endurance" is the emphatic word in some of the apostolic writings and in the apocalyptic letters to the Asian Churches. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." "We walk by faith, not by sight." Certain cults now stressing visions and voices as from the Holy Spirit are deluded by evil spirits imitating ancient ways not now used as in Christianity, plainly explained in Scripture. Much mischief results. "Hold fast the form (outline) of sound words" is our safe motto and practice. We cannot emphasize this too much in these days when the air is full of diabolisms that delude multitudes and almost deceive the very elect with counterfeit light.

#### PECULIAR PEOPLE

Persecution is not to be sought. Fanatics have even courted martyrdom. Jesus said to flee persecution by moving away from it—but to endure patiently when unavoidable. Certainly no compromise of right may be considered. A false pride in being persecuted has sometimes appeared among ignorant fanatics by using odd customs in dress, speech, or manners, quite apart from any righteousness. In ignorance, some have supposed piety (righteousness with them) to consist somewhat in being odd; for does not the Bible call Christians a peculiar people? Here is a good specimen of the inferential theology mentioned previously. Because we attach the meaning "odd" to the word "peculiar", it is inferred that such is the only meaning, so the one in the Bible. A glance in the Dictionary would correct



the notion. The primary idea in "peculiar" is that of appropriateness for special and exclusive personal use. "A peculiar people" (in Biblical meaning) is not queer but the very opposite—a people characterized as fitted for God's service. In Titus 2:14, the special peculiarity is stated to be devotion to good works. Nothing queer about that, unless in the opinion of wicked people. In James 2:9, the peculiarity is explained to be fitness to declare the perfections of him who has called us from darkness into his marvelous light. Nothing queer in this either. A small sect in England is styled "Peculiar People." It repudiates all creeds, has no ministers and confines itself entirely to prayer—a really queer people, but without sanction in Scripture. The only queerness about real Christians is their holy living which seems queer to the worldly, as stated in 1 Pet. 4:4.

#### WHY PERSECUTED

"All who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." One of the strangest things in history checks with this exactly. Gibbon makes a statement that confirms the prediction that persecution would have special reference to the way of life in Christ. From Chapter XVI (Vol. I) we quote:

If we seriously consider the purity of the Christian religion, the sanctity of its moral precepts, and the innocent as well as austere lives of the greater number of those who during the first ages embraced the faith of the gospel, we should naturally suppose that so benevolent a doctrine would have been received with due reverence even by the unbelieving world; that the learned and polite, however they might deride the miracles, would have esteemed the virtues of the new sect; and that the magistrates, instead of persecuting, would have protected an order of men who yielded the most passive obedience to the laws, though they declined the active cares of war and government. If, on the other hand, we recollect the universal tolerance of Polytheism, as it was invariably maintained by the faith

of the people, the incredulity of philosophers, and the policy of the Roman senate and emperors, we are at a loss to discover what new offense the Christians had committed, what new provocation could exasperate the mild indifference of antiquity, and what new motives could urge the Roman princes, who beheld without concern a thousand forms of religion subsisting in peace under their gentle sway, to inflict a severe punishment on any part of their subjects who had chosen for themselves a singular but an inoffensive mode of faith and worship. The religious policy of the ancient world seems to have assumed a more stern and intolerant character to oppose the progress of Christianity.

Gibbon later finds explanations for subsequent persecutions, but the one for the primary hostility is the fact of Christ's personality. Behind paganism is Satan, who incites his followers to hostility toward Christians as such, regardless of other considerations.

#### SPIRIT PERSECUTORS

Even now, if a Christian is free from any persecution it is well for him to examine himself as to whether he is really living godly in Christ Jesus. With so many perversions and mysteries of iniquity filling the world, many, in following the crowds, escape the abuse that is sure to come in some form to the faithful. Live according to the Beatitudes, and you will soon realize at least a little of what living godly in Christ Jesus brings. "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you; for so did their fathers to the false prophets." (Lk.6:26). Especially will persecutions come from evil spirits in the way of painful evil thoughts that must be endured as we endure the barking of dogs. Sometimes pious people, not understanding, are alarmed at such experiences, and are misled into thinking the Holy Spirit has left them. But they need to remember that devils do not waste time with the unspiritual, whose carnal lusts keep them busy in sin. The Spirit expressly led Jesus



out to be tempted of the Devil. Such conflict is needed for the perfecting of every soul. Fiery trials are common to Christians, who are strengthened to endure. It is a good sign when a devil thinks it is worth while to annoy and persecute a Christian. The most dangerous thing for Christians is to have full peace from persecution. Ease fosters carelessness, indifference, indulgence and even apostasy.

#### HATERS OF LIGHT

Evil doers hate light. They do not wish to see truth, yet are not willing for their wickedness to be exposed by truth. As Tholuck says,

The Christian is, by his very appearance, a moving conscience to excuse or condemn the children of the world. . . Christians must, by the testimony of their word, condemn the nature of the world.

Wicked men hate such reminders of their wickedness, and sometimes resent by doing violence to the innocent whose very presence is a reminder and a rebuke. And Satan is especially malignant to those who live godly in Christ Jesus. Notwithstanding their former wickedness they are living right lives because of the salvation through Christ. This is a reproof to Satan who sinned without provocation, so can never be redeemed. He is furious to take vengeance on his former victims, and also bitter against Jesus Christ for having saved those whom he had tried to destroy. So he persecutes with malignant violence. The most faithful Christians suffer most, because the tormentor is especially bitter toward those who maintain their fidelity and integrity. So did the sinless Jesus suffer violent temptations because he refused to yield. We are told that Jesus *suffered* from temptations. Those who live nearest to him share in such trials unto suffering. Humble saints have gone through years of torture from persecuting devils who

not only afflicted their bodies, but more severely beset their minds with most diabolical thoughts. Some very devout and capable preachers have so suffered during considerable periods except while in the pulpit. Many capable Christian writers likewise suffer.

#### REWARD OF PERSECUTED

Blessed—persecuted—righteousness' sake. These four words outline a full volume of interesting and valuable thoughts which we may merely hint at here.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us. Note the "in" us, not "to" us. *Persecution perfects personality.* The captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, and we are partakers of his nature.

For our present light burden of affliction works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal load of glory. (Proper rendering). We are sure of big dividends in the hereafter on our present investments in sufferings.

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.

Christ asks only what he went through. We are not fit to be kings unless we fight, endure and overcome.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary (the Devil), as a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace who has called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

God's purpose in calling us to be Christians is to impart to and develop in us his own nature. He takes care that needed training is not too severe, and if we do get bruised and torn sometimes his grace sustains, mends and restores so that we do not fail if we are faithful.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."



## THE REVILED

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*Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

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HITHERTO the Messiah spoke on the general principles of the Kingdom of Heaven, giving some indication of what that kingdom is. Here he becomes directly personal, addressing the disciples, particularly the apostles as such. It was a warning of what to expect, and an encouragement to endurance. These persecutions were to come because of special activity in preaching Christ and his gospel. That name and what it meant were the offensive things, not the apostles themselves. The violence would be exasperating with accusations, slander, name-calling, insult, misrepresentation, ridicule, false witness. It could not be escaped. When the image of Christ is formed in believers, and wicked people recognize it by the clean language, right conduct, consistent fidelity, and earnest testimony, they are likely to say mean things. But their words are false—plain lies—and they know it. They are of the Devil, the original accuser and slanderer.

The emphasis is on "for my sake"—on account of Christ. There is no credit in being called names for our own follies—we may deserve them. If we are cranks, fanatics, perverters, we may merit ridicule. But slan-

der as a spite against our being active Christians is an honor that comes only to the immortals. To endure it patiently and quietly, without resentment, is to our praise and reward. History records peculiar and extravagant slanders against the early Christians because of the name of Christ. Their very gentleness and patience exasperated their accusers, who invented the most outrageous lies to incite persecution. When Christianity becomes somewhat popular, the opposition does not dare to openly persecute, but hides behind false accusations that give excuse for violence. Jesus was crucified under false charges. It is no disgrace to be so treated.

#### PROOF OF GENUINENESS

The fact that Jesus frankly forewarned his followers to expect violence for their faith is evidence of his genuineness, and of his kingdom not being of this world. Impostors who seek a following deceive by promise of ease, plenty and popularity—personal advantage. But Jesus frankly assured just to the contrary—his followers must bear the cross to win the crown. One can not but note the inconsistent practice of a professedly Christian people in this line. Young men are ensnared into enlistment for army and navy service by glowing representations of pleasures, advantages and rewards. With enticing photographs and printed promises of travel advantages, educational training, and easy honors, the recruiting stations appeal to the selfish imaginations and ambitions of young men. Not patriotism, but plain selfishness, is the appeal. Then, when one dies in battle, he is immediately forced into heaven by the crying chaplains and other soft sentimentalists who impudently substitute patriotism for Jesus Christ as the door. As Christians we are to be subject to the civil authorities where we live. But God, as revealed in Christ, has no



ethnic partiality, and heaven is not a reward for even American patriotism unto death. It is wrong always to substitute sentiments for facts. Much of so-called gospel preaching is not such, but is sentimental gush having only temporary dramatic effect. Truth is eternal. Emotions are fickle and often delusive. Pagans and Mohammedans have the doctrine that heaven is a reward for death in battle, but Christianity contradicts.

More than seventy years ago a former army major wrote in a book directly in this line, as follows:

Recruiting sergeants, with their drums and fifes, try to allure by the pride, pomp and circumstance of war, but they never allude to the hot, weary marches, the dreary night watches, the mangled limbs and crushed carcasses of the battle field.

Writing now, with the added inventions of art and science, he would emphasize the unholy methods of allurements employed—so contrary to the frankness becoming a people professing Christianity. The same writer, Prof. D. H. Hill, of Davidson College, North Carolina, added:

False religions have ever been profuse in promises of temporal well-being and eternal glory, won without holiness of heart and life. Mahomet promised riches, honors, sensual indulgence, and a passport to heaven, to all who followed the Crescent, irrespective of their sins and pollutions. The Mormon prophet promised wealth, ease, luxury, and licentious indulgence to all who would acknowledge him as their spiritual guide and temporal leader. Jesus Christ promised nothing to his disciples but trials and afflictions (in this world). Poverty, contempt, a life of shame and a death of ignominy were to be their lot and portion.

Nevertheless, about a hundred years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, Christianity had spread throughout the then-known world. Receiving "slander instead of applause, contempt instead of glory," believers persisted in their loyalty and virtue—a proof of the genuineness of their cause. Without the sword, even in defense, they conquered a heathen world; for God, by his Spirit, was with them to appeal to the conscience of men. It was

a sorry day when the church let the beast (civil power using force) take control, displacing spiritual influence. Some reading of the history of Christianity instead of novels would be both wise and useful right here today.

### PLEASURE FROM SLANDER

The way to meet such insult and violence is not with retaliation, but with patient endurance and even with a real pleasure. "Rejoice and be exceeding glad." Strange entertainment, this, to make one happy enough to leap and dance; for such is the idea contained in the Greek for "exceeding glad." Contempt, slander and even violence beat a fiddle in stimulating hilarity!! They even exceed rich wine in making happy!! Such is the way of the Kingdom of Heaven—getting greatest fun out of slander and violence because of the name of Christ. It was with reason that Jesus said his kingdom is not of this world. How different from the modern church way of keeping up interest by "beautifying the service;" by dramatics, movies, and other slovenly tricks! Christ is *not* with such clap-trap schemes. The Holy Spirit is insulted by such silly buffonery to sustain interest in an alleged religious service. Moderns ridicule the anthropomorphic Jews, but Jews revered God, and worship was with dignity. It takes up-to-date educated triflers to offer clown-stuff for worship. Even rankest pagans show some respect to their idols. But our worshippers of their own ideals can not have much reverence for the divinities within, considering who made them!! A jazz atmosphere is invented and enjoyed only by jazzy minds. As jazz is a modern word, we look for another in Scripture, and find it in 2 Tim. 4:3—"itching ears." Paul said a situation would arise wherein people would not tolerate sensible things, but would chase after men who would tickle their ears (in the Greek). Entertain-



ment programs in churches are a delusion. There is no immortality in jazz or in its devotees. Even self-respect is wanting in modern worship, so beautifully jazzed.

But surely there is something superhuman about the proposition to be hilariously happy because of insults on account of the name of Christ. It is quite contrary to the natural way. "Blessed are" you when so treated explains it, with the added encouragement "great is your reward in heaven." Undergoing such abuse, one is conscious of fellowship with the Eternal Spirit, and that is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." It is a royal road one travels when he is assailed by abuse, hate, contempt, malice, and deliberate false accusations (such is the force of the Greek word for "falsely" in the passage)—a road trod by prophets and by Christ, himself. Good company to be in—good fellowship forever; the bliss of eternal life with holy company!

It is a strange proposition, but true, that reviling and persecution are a direct benefit to those who suffer them. Enemies of righteousness only enrich it by their opposition and violence. They make it more conspicuous by contrast, and even strengthen it by stimulating endurance. As tree-fiber is strengthened by hard winds, as muscle is developed by the resistance of burdens, so is the moral nature made better and stronger by enduring trials, and the spiritual is exalted by experience of opposition. Fire both proves and refines gold. Tribulation works endurance; endurance, patience; patience, experience; experience, hope; and hope does not disappoint.

Humility, sobriety, meekness, aspiration for righteousness, mercy, purity, peaceableness, endurance—all are benefitted, improved, refined, confirmed, established, exalted in the universe, by the insults and violence of opposition. "*Blessed are;*" and "*great is*" the reward in store for all who have a part in these things. They

and the Kingdom of Heaven belong together now ; and disciplined spirits, heroic characters, perfected supermen, will forever be with the Lord in the sphere of an eternal glory. Amen.

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SOME other "Blesseds" were spoken by our Lord that are interesting and important. It would be pleasant and profitable to discuss them, but they are outside the special group of this study. We may mention two as being peculiarly in order for attention in these times.

*Blessed are they that hear the word of God  
and keep it.*

*Blessed are they that have not seen,  
and yet have believed.*

One commends the rational integrity that acknowledges and accepts permanently the revealed wisdom of God.

The other commends that intuitional faith which sees truth directly it is uttered, without demanding evidence.

Both affirm God's approval of and reward to the child-like mind that characterizes the Kingdom of Heaven.

Such souls are THE IMMORTALS of our title.



## CONCLUSION

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As before mentioned, all the conditions of blessedness we have been studying are *permanent states of essential character or personality*. They are possible with every one who consents. The Kingdom of Heaven is a free institution, so to speak—nobody is driven into it. Nor is anybody taken captive and dragged there. Satan does that sort of thing in his kingdom of darkness, taking captive and holding in bondage. Hypnotism and crowd contagion are of such order. God gives the freedom of sons voluntarily acting. Before Christ came, all the world was in bondage of darkness, not knowing but guessing as to both present and future. Christ brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel. He was not an idealist, as some say, but revealed the eternal real in God. Those who accept Christ and his truth become partakers, not of ideals, but of the immortal God. No philosophy of idealism can conjecture the glory of even the fragmentary earnest, or foretaste, of the heavenly blessedness of those who have within themselves the life principles described in the Beatitudes. Such a life is said to be hid with Christ in God. Of such it is said that, as the Lord is in heaven, so are they in this world.

"The Kingdom of God is come unto you" meant an administration of heavenly ways on earth—really, not theoretically. Jesus never taught dramatic prayer. He meant business when he said to pray "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." In the Beatitudes he explained what that involved. Many

people utter that prayer while acting directly contrary to it. The "Lord's Prayer" is repeated in schools, but the programs of those schools emphasize principles and practices that directly contradict and violate the very essentials of the Kingdom of Heaven. This applies to Sunday schools, also. The call to repent comes to this age with megaphone emphasis. Will it be heard amid the din and confusion of modern worldliness and psychological delusions masquerading in the name of a higher spirituality—so delightfully dramatic and romantic?

As king, Christ will not receive a queen who is not in harmony with himself, both within herself and in her attitude toward the administration of the kingdom. Wherein the church, as betrothed queen of Christ, now violates the principles expressed in the Beatitudes, she must purify herself and come into the right relation to the eternal Spirit of truth, righteousness and holiness.

ONLY THE IMMORTALS CAN CONSTITUTE  
THE BRIDE OF THE KING.

